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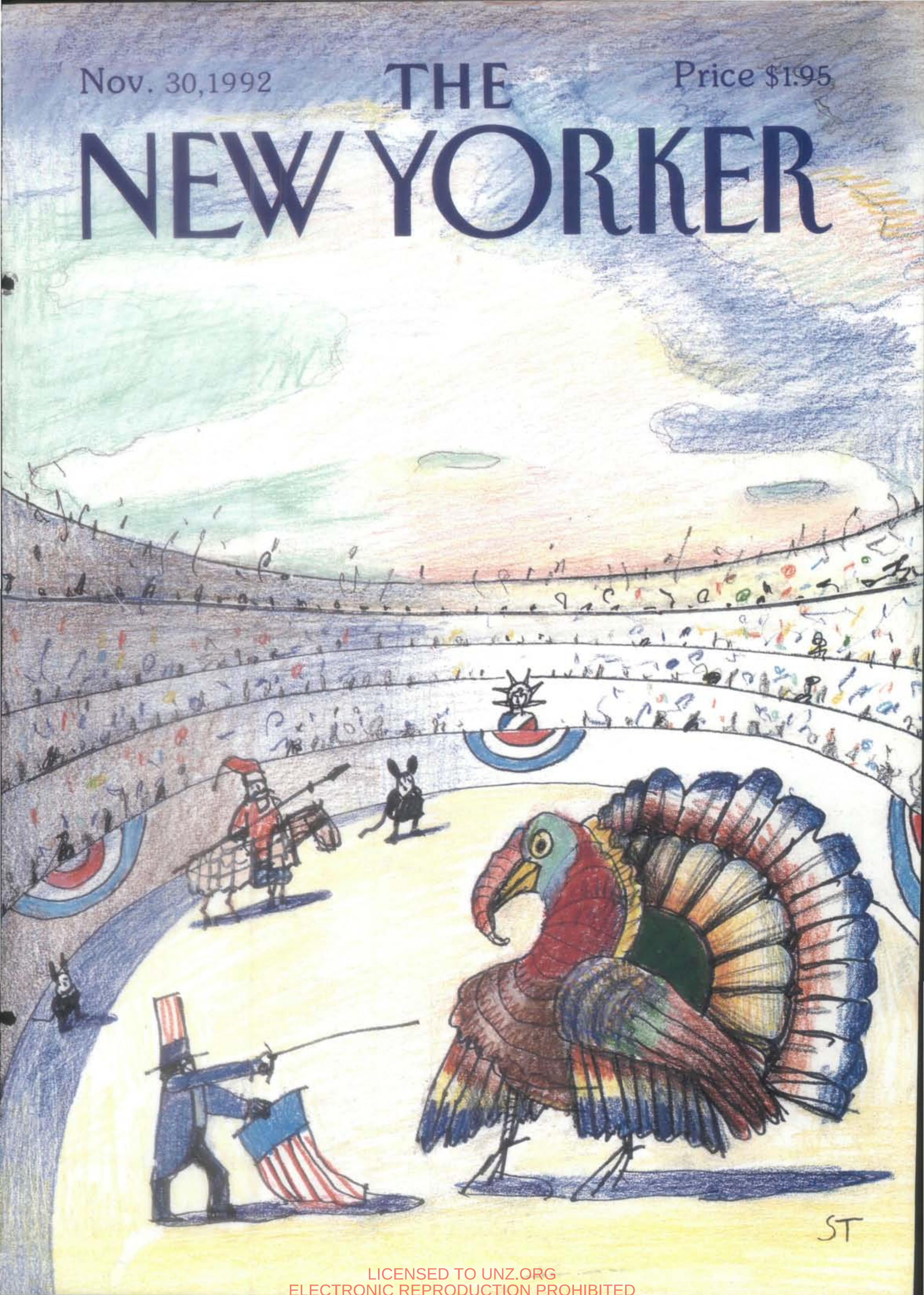

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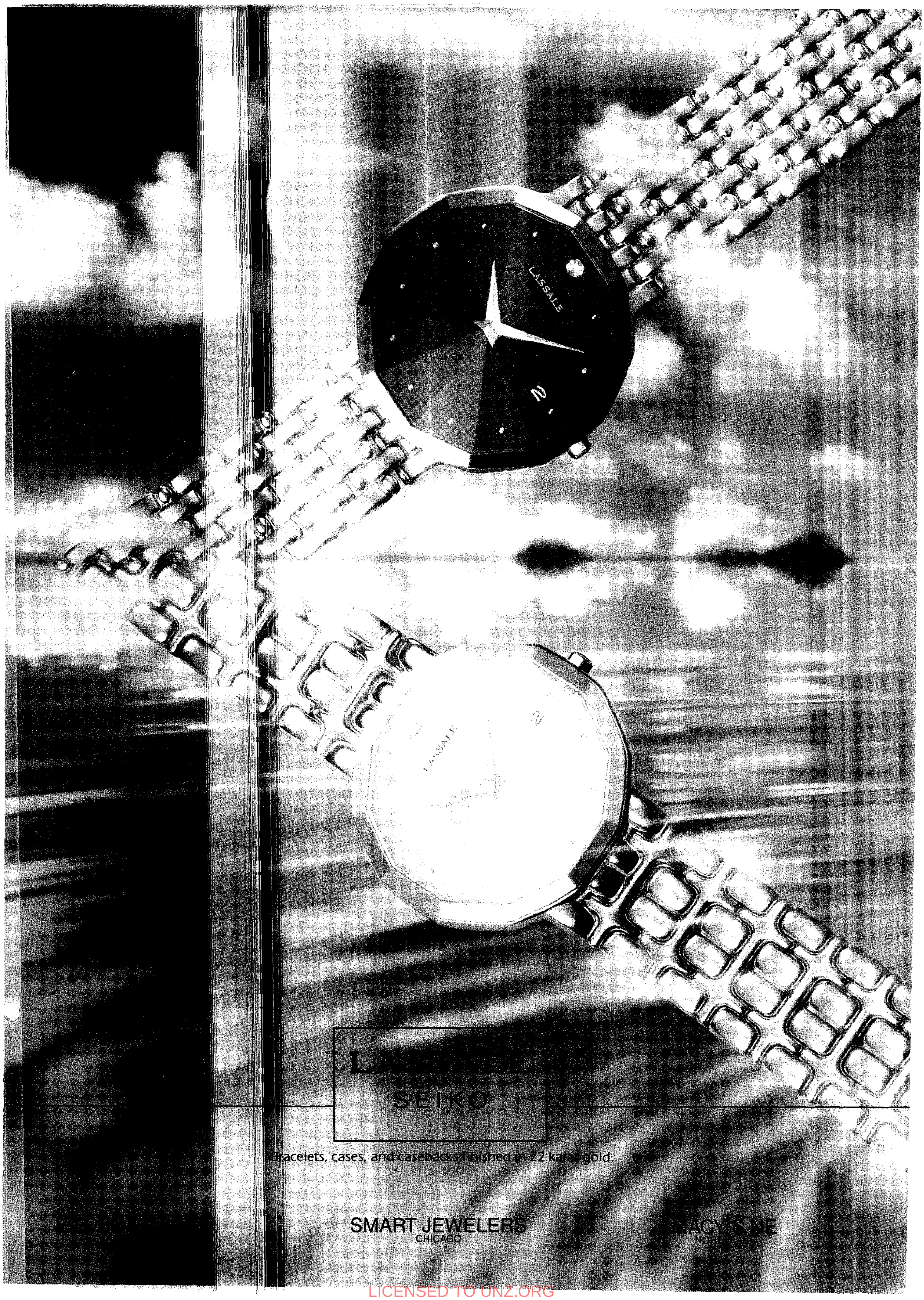
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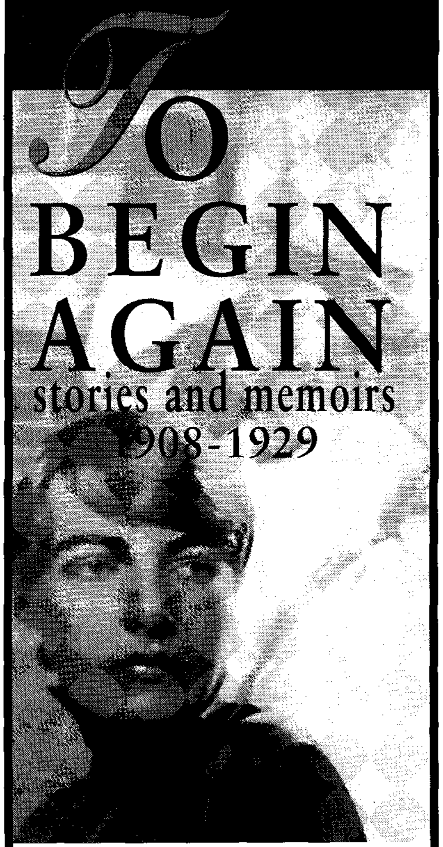

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PANTHEON

COMMENT

A FONDNESS FOR THE GALLOWS

THE voters of New Jersey had a tough call to make on Election Day. At issue was the definition of "intent" in capital murder cases. As it turned out, a substantial majority voted to widen the definition. But the real question voters were being asked to decide was not a fine point of law. It was whether the state should be able to get on with the execution of the prisoners it has on death row, and the answer was never really in doubt. Capital punishment enjoys overwhelming public support in this country today. It is, increasingly, one of the things that make America unique.

It has been some time now since capital punishment disappeared from most of the world's industrialized democracies. In country after country, the abolition process was remarkably similar. First, the death penalty fell into disuse. Eventually, it was formally outlawed. In every case, final abolition occurred *despite* widespread public opposition. This fondness for the gallows tends to ebb dramatically over time, however. In West Germany, seventy-four per cent of the population favored the death penalty in 1948. It was outlawed there in 1949, and by 1980 support had fallen to twenty-six per cent. Among people who don't grow up with it, capital punishment comes to be seen as a barbaric relic, like slavery or branding. In Western Europe today, it is no longer a political issue at all.

A generation ago, this country, too, seemed poised on the brink of abolition. Executions had declined inexorably—from a hundred and ninety-nine in 1935 to one in 1967, and none for a decade after that—and in 1972 the United States Supreme Court effectively ruled all existing capital statutes unconstitutional. The popular backlash was intense: thirty-five state legislatures passed new death-penalty laws over the next few years. And the Supreme Court, as the saying goes, blinked. In 1976, the Court essentially reversed its earlier decision, finding that capital punishment was not, in and of itself, cruel and unusual, and therefore did not violate the Eighth Amendment. The basis for the Court's new ruling was, primarily, the public's support for capital punishment. Elected representatives in other developed countries had found the courage to lead public opinion on this tormented, fundamental question, but under our constitutional system it had fallen to the judiciary to deliver the coup

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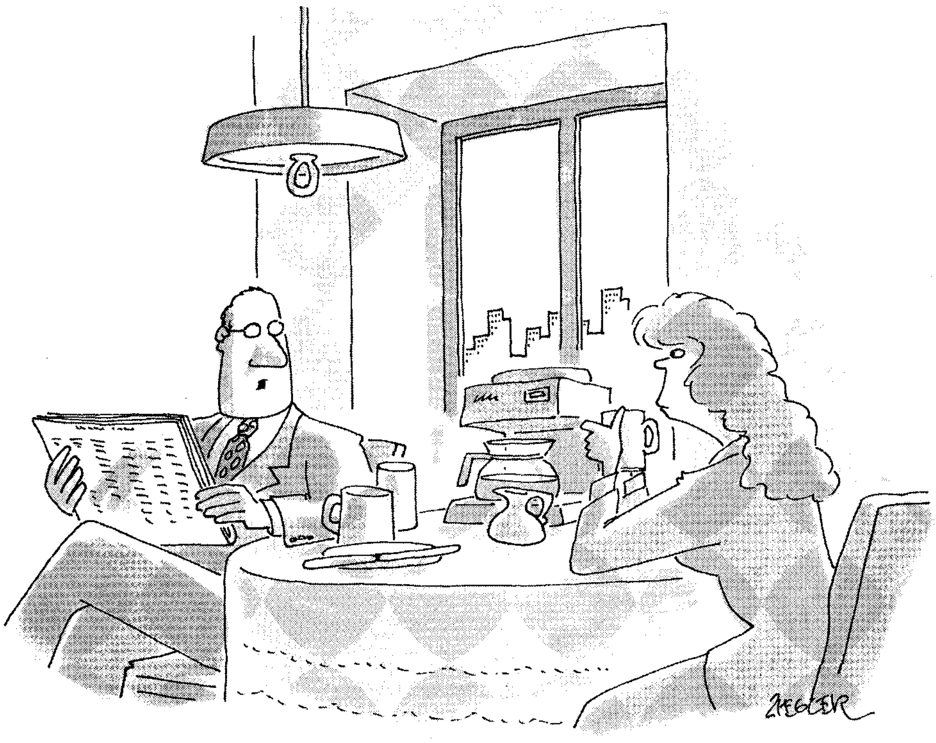

"God has chosen to ignore my prayers concerning the outcome of this year's election, and so I feel that I am once again free to be a very bad little boy."

• •

de grâce to the death penalty. And the Supreme Court, whose members hold life tenure largely to insulate them from majoritarian passions, had decided not to lead but to follow.

As of last week, twenty-nine Americans had been put to death in 1992—the highest toll in thirty years. Internationally, we find ourselves, on this issue, in the company of such nations as Iraq, Iran, and China. Politically repressive regimes and capital punishment are natural bedfellows. And if the publicly expressed impatience of Chief Justice William Rehnquist (and of the people of New Jersey and other states) should lead to the elimination of the legal procedures that currently stall most death sentences we could end up in a class all by ourselves. There are twenty-six hundred people on death row in America. That's enough to have an execution every day, week in and week out, year in and year out, for the rest of the century.

If history is any guide, it won't happen. American public feeling about capital punishment has run in long cycles, with each reformist wave breaking up on the rocks of an era of increased violence. In the eighteen-forties, anti-gallows societies inspired abolition of the death penalty in three states, but disappeared after the outbreak of the Mexican War. A second major reform era ended with the First World War. The most recent reform wave, which peaked in the mid-nineteen-sixties, when a majority of Americans actually opposed the death penalty, was halted by the terrible rise in violent crime which began around that time. The crime rate remains high. Even so, there is more reason to believe that we will eventually gather ourselves for another push toward abolition than to assume that we will continue to drift indefinitely in the other direction.

A perverse sign that we may soon be ready to reason on this subject showed up in a 1991 Gallup Poll. It found that, while seventy-five per cent of Americans support the death penalty, only thirteen per cent think that it has any actual deterrent effect on crime. (And, in fact, many studies have failed to prove any such effect.) When those who supported the death penalty were asked to choose their reason, fully half picked "a life for a life." This is an expression of anger and hopelessness, not a basis for public policy. And the shallowness of people's support for capital punishment seems clear from the sharp drop in that support whenever a strong alternative, such as life imprisonment without parole, is offered.

There were twenty-four thousand murders in the United States last year. The process by which all those crimes produce a handful of executions, where it is not simply random, is demonstrably discriminatory: if your victim was white, you are anywhere from four to eleven times as likely to be given the death penalty as you are if your victim was black. As criminal justice, the death penalty is almost entirely symbolic. All politicians understand the symbolism, of course, and most defer to its power, choosing to be safe from the charge of being "soft on crime" rather than have to explain their thinking to a frightened and angry public. Bill Clinton, who as governor of Arkansas presided over four executions, has not been impervious to the political charms of the death penalty. Although by Southern gubernatorial standards he has not exploited the issue, he did advertise his own support for the death penalty in campaign commercials, claiming that he was sending "a strong signal to criminals." Is it too much to hope that this sort of thing is part of *his* "campaign mode," and that he may lift the level of his approach to criminal justice once he takes office as President?

It *is* too much to hope, certainly, that Mr. Clinton will suddenly seize on capital punishment as a human-rights issue—the way President Mitterrand of France did in 1981, when he abolished the guillotine immediately after taking office. For even if Mr. Clinton wanted to do something similar the American system of government wouldn't permit it. What does seem possible is that he and his Justice Department—in view, especially, of a new and rapidly expanding *federal* death penalty—might begin to provide some reasoned leadership on this issue. Mr. Clinton might point out, for a start, the virtual certainty that if we continue to employ capital punishment we will now and then be executing an entirely innocent person. If he cannot see, or does not feel he can adequately explain, the basic moral horror of the state's coldly taking any human life, then he might, in these budget-conscious times, at least explain to the American people that the cost of death-penalty prosecutions—and, when they occur, of executions—is several times the cost of keeping the criminals concerned in prison for life. He might also make his Supreme Court appointments with an eye on history, and not on the polls. ♦

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Heard on High

It may be silly to call interest in angels a trend, but they have been turning up everywhere, especially in the theatre. They appear in "Angels in America" and in "Mad Forest" and in a little show in the Village called "Accord of Angels." Late-night theatre is enjoying a similar resurgence, and is it merely accidental that the revival seems to have been spurred by a show from a company named Naked Angels? The show in question is Jeff Weiss's serial "Hot Keys" (114 West 17th Street; Fridays and Saturdays at midnight), whose continuing success seems to have inspired directors of other downtown stages to come up with new, or renewed, ideas. At Manhattan Class Company (120 West 28th Street), for example, a weekend cabaret series called "After Hours"—which in this case means at 11:30 P.M.—is already under way. On the docket are Keith David (November 27-28), Donna McKechnie (December 4-5), and Lillias White (December 11-12). Miss White will perform songs from an upcoming musical about Hoagy Carmichael—another trend in the making?

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

A Backer's Audition—A new musical by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell. In previews. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

CBS Live—"I Love Lucy" and "The Honeymooners" episodes in a format that uses both live actors and videotape. Preview on Nov. 23. Opens Nov. 24 at 8. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 279-4200.)

Christchild—An allegorical play by J. e Franklin. Opens Nov. 23 at 8. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 576-9028.)

"Gypsy of the Year" Competition—Chorus members of Broadway and Off Broadway shows perform in this fourth annual benefit event. Jonathan Hadary is the host, and Tyne Daly and Leanza Cornet, Miss America 1992, will present awards. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. Dec. 1 at 4:30. Tickets available on a first-come, first-served basis at the door on the afternoon of the benefit.)

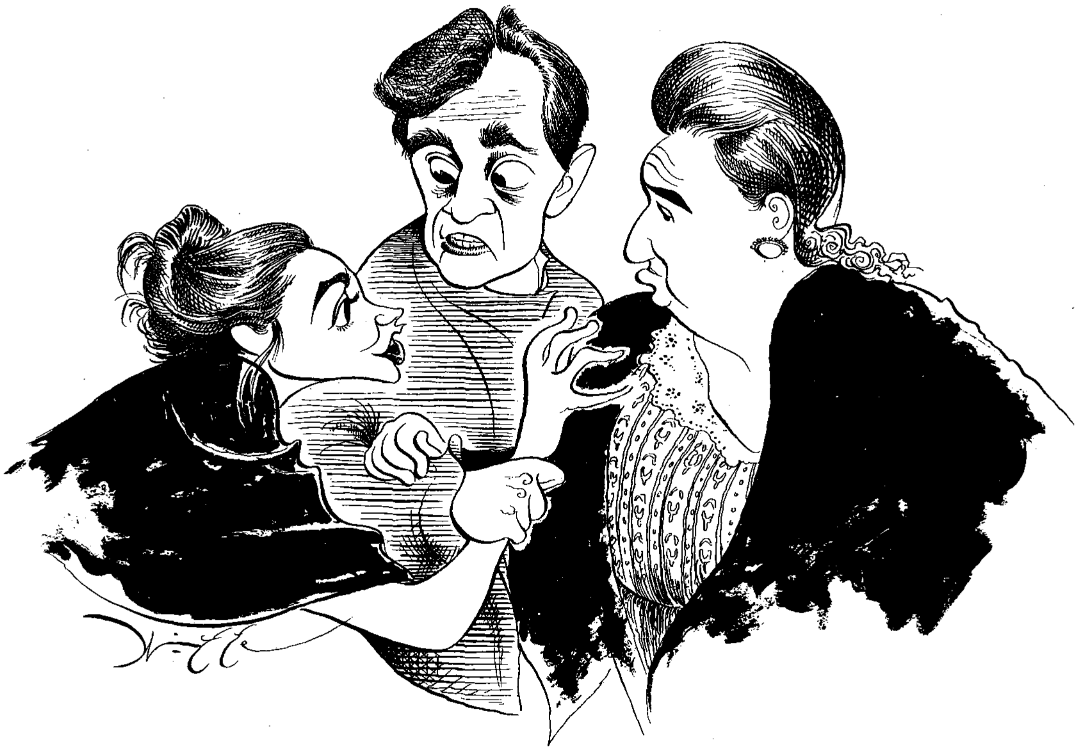
Gypsy Passion—Eighteen Spanish dancers, singers, and musicians in the return engagement of a flamenco revue that played New York briefly in the spring. Preview on Nov. 23. Opens Nov. 24 at 8. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah—A musical based on the song parodies of Allan Sherman. It was conceived and written by Douglas Bernstein and Rob Krausz. Stephen Berger, Tovah Feldshuh, Jason Graae, Paul Kreppel, and Mary Testa make up the cast. In previews. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

My Favorite Year—A new musical, based on the movie of the same name, by Joseph Dougherty, Stephen Flaherty, and Lynn Ahrens. Evan Pappas, Tim Curry, and Lainie Kazan have the leads. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Noël and Gertie—A show by Sheridan Morley about Noël Coward and Gertrude Lawrence. In previews. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 534-5366.)

On the Bum—Cynthia Nixon in a comedy by Neal Bell. Preview on Nov. 23. Opens Nov. 24 at 8. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)



Ofelia Medina, Ron Faber, and Luz Castaños in "Words Divine"

Orpheus in Love—A comic opera-theatre piece with words by Craig Lucas and music by Gerald Busby. Directed by Kirsten Sanderson. Previews begin Nov. 27. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

The Seagull—Chekhov's play launches the second season of the National Actors Theatre. With Tyne Daly, Jon Voight, Laura Linney, and Ethan Hawke. Directed by Marshall W. Mason. Previews through Nov. 28. Opens Nov. 29 at 3. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me—Alec McCowen, James McDaniel, and Stephen Rea portray three hostages in Beirut in a drama by the Irish playwright Frank McGuinness. Opens Nov. 23 at 6:45. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Woyzeck—Jesse Borrego has the title role in a production of Georg Büchner's play, directed by JoAnne Akalaitis. With music by Philip Glass and a translation by Henry J. Schmidt. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

OPENED RECENTLY

A . . . My Name Is Still Alice—A sequel to the 1984 musical revue "A . . . My Name Is Alice." Conceived and directed by Joan Micklin Silver and Julianne Boyd. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Accord of Angels—A comedy by Frederick Timm. (Wings Theatre, 154 Christopher St. 627-2961.)

The Best of Forbidden Broadway—This tenth-anniversary edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running, ever-fluctuating musical revue is, as one might expect, a treat. There is some new material, but the sharpest sequences are still the spoof of "M. Butterfly" and the "Speed-the-Plow" number, "Madonna's Brain," in which David Mamet and Ron Silver try to teach Madonna to act and she ends up tearing off most of her clothes. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/4/92.) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. The show's holiday edition, "Forbidden Christmas," starts on Dec. 1.)

Brother Truckers—Murder and mayhem from the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, which, at its best (as it is here), gives excess a good name. Everett Quinton, who plays a rich bitch, and Elizabeth Fried, who is Quinton's real-life costumier, are chiefly responsible for the evening's success. The playwright is Georg Osterman. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

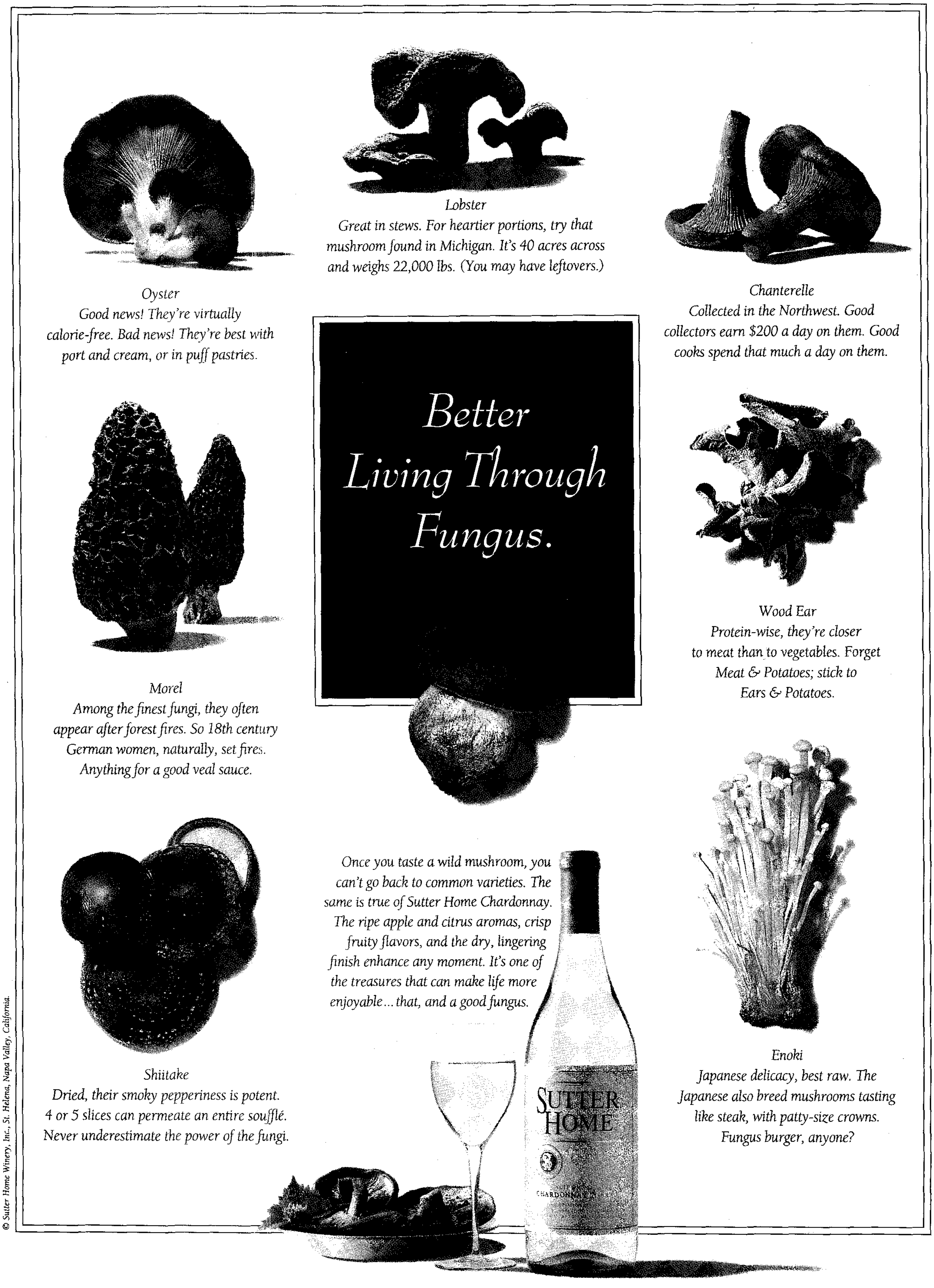
Bubbe Meises, Bubbe Stories—A musical in which a granddaughter recalls her grandmothers and their stories. Written by, and starring, Ellen Gould. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Cambodia Agonistes—A music-theatre work by Ernest Abuba and Louis Stewart, which opens the season for Pan Asian Rep. Tisa Chang directed. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Closes Nov. 28.)

Conversations with My Father—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try the new Herb Gardner, a bittersweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. Staged by Daniel Sullivan, with a cast led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Destiny of Me—A new play by Larry Kramer. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

MICHAEL WITTE



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Shiitake
Dried, their smoky pepperiness is potent. 4 or 5 slices can permeate an entire soufflé. Never underestimate the power of the fungi.

Enoki
Japanese delicacy, best raw. The Japanese also breed mushrooms tasting like steak, with patty-size crowns. Fungus burger, anyone?

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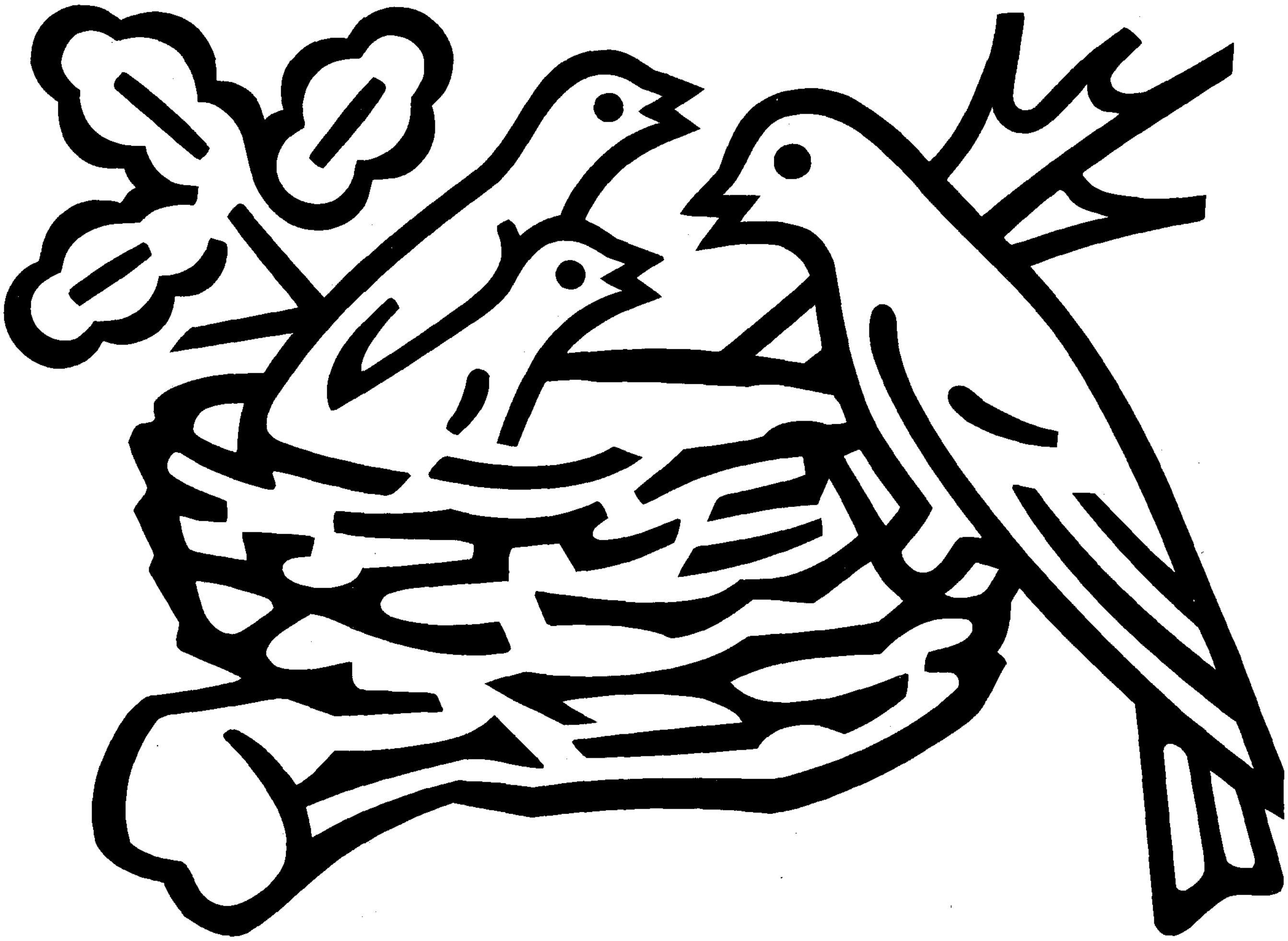

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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

Falsettos—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. The appeal of Mr. Finn's trilogy has always been puzzling. It has a chronology as complicated as the Oedipus cycle's and a dramatic sensibility akin to that of the Oresteia. But it has always seemed like banality set to music: shallow, unlikable people expressing themselves in shallow, unlikable songs. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Five Guys Named Moe—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Guys and Dolls—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Adam Arkin and Faith Prince are the leading guy and doll, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris—A revival of the musical put together from the works of M. Brel by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman. Gabriel Barré, Andrea Green, Joseph Neal, and Karen Saunders are in the cast. Performances resume Nov. 24. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Two works in rotating repertory: THE CARETAKER, by Harold Pinter, and THE IDIOT, David Fishelson's new adaptation of Dostoevsky's novel. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Jelly's Last Jam—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if there ever was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Joined at the Head—A play written by, and featuring, Catherine Butterfield. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes Dec. 6.)

The Lament for Arthur Cleary—Jenny Conroy and David Herlihy star in the New York première of a 1989 play by Dermot Bolger. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Mad Forest—A cast of eleven accomplished American actors recreates British playwright Caryl Churchill's examination of the effect of the fall of the Ceausescu regime on two Romanian families from different social strata. Repression and resignation feature in equal parts in Churchill's well-researched and well-written drama. Superbly staged by Mark Wing-Davey, who conceived the piece in 1990, the minimalist production is elegant and unforgettable. (10/26/92) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes Nov. 29.)

Murder in Disguise—A gay comedy mystery written by John Glines. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St., at Bleecker St. 564-8038. Closes Nov. 29.)

The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me—A series of vignettes, by the rising writer/performer David Drake, about gay life in the age of AIDS. Mr. Drake is more gifted as a performer than as a writer, but his show is frequently absorbing—by turns silly and poignant. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

Oleanna—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other isms in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. Rebecca Pidgeon and William H. Macy lend articulate support to a play whose skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Not to be missed. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

Othello—Clinton Turner Davis has directed this production of Shakespeare's play, which features Raphael Nash in the title role. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

Program for Murder—A thriller by George W. George and Jeff Travers. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Remembrance—Set in Belfast, Graham Reid's absorbing and often entertaining play tells the story of a man and a woman—he a Protestant and she a Catholic, and both of them widowed and in their sixties—who meet regularly at a cemetery (each there to mourn a son who was a victim of the current "troubles") and who slowly fall in love. They are both beset by grown children who, in different ways, raise hell. The action is a matter of brief scenes, some of them quite funny. Milo O'Shea and Frances Sternhagen can seldom have been better than they are in the leading roles, and they are ably supported by Mia Dillon, Caroleen Feeney, John Finn, and Terry Donnelly. Terence Lamude directed. (10/12/92) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077.)

Roleplay—A musical by Doug Haverty and Adryan Russ about five women in group therapy. (Village Theatre Company, 133 W. 22nd St. 564-8038.)

Ruthless!—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)

CHLOE CHEESE

The Sheik of Avenue B—A Jewish ragtime and jazz-era music-and-comedy revue conceived and written by Isaiah Sheffer. Featuring music by Irving Berlin, Bert Kalmar, Harry Ruby, Billy Rose, and others. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

The Show-Off—George Kelly's beguiling, irresistible comedy, about a young braggart who woos and wins the daughter of a North Philadelphia family, has been given a splendid revival by the Roundabout, under the canny direction of Brian Murray. First produced in 1924, the play is still fresh as paint. Boyd Gaines, tall and skinny and unable to leave any mirror unglimpsed, is the flamboyant hero, and Pat Carroll, as his mother-in-law, is his toughest antagonist, with a repertoire of some of the funniest lines a character has ever been awarded. Both leads are very good, and they are well supported by Laura Esterman, Sophie Hayden, and Tim DeKay, among others. (11/16/92) (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes Dec. 6.)

Sister, Sister—A one-woman show, conceived and performed by Vinie Burrows, that incorporates material by Zora Neale Hurston, Sean O'Casey, Adrienne Rich, and Carl Sandburg, among others. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074. Closes Nov. 29.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Frances McDormand, and Madeline Kahn, each of whom proves worthy (and then some) of her role. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Solitary Confinement—Stacy Keach manages to generate some excitement in this dopey play about a wicked billionaire, who, fearing for his life, shuts himself up in his apartment, communicating with his staff only by remote control; they appear on a large overhead screen and then vanish. Rupert Holmes was the dramatist. (11/23/92) (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 307-4100.)

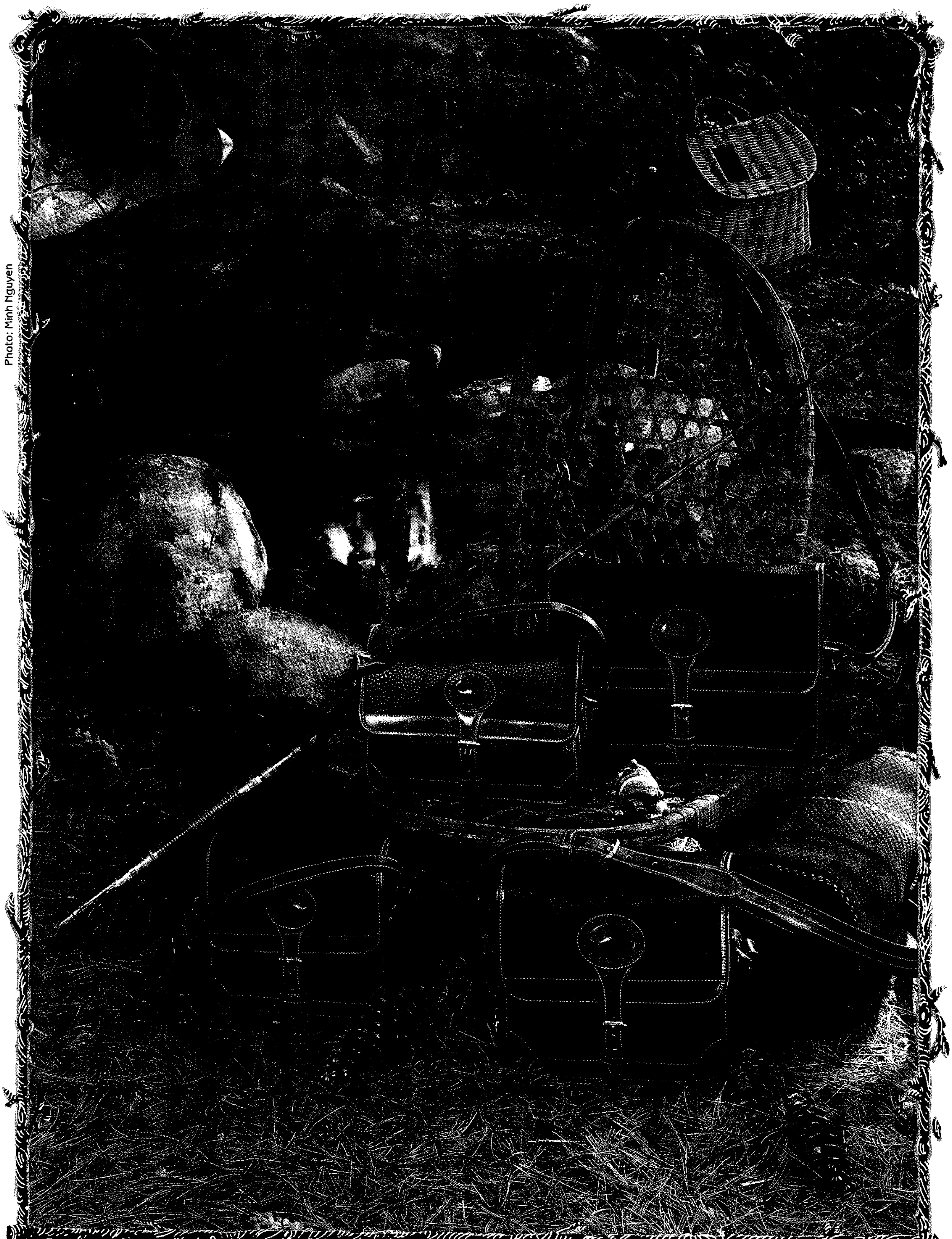
Spic-O-Rama—Six well-written characters who have found not only their author but also their performer in John Leguizamo's scintillating and scathing one-man show about Latino life in the Big City. Leguizamo is vivacious, inventive, and very, very funny. The show is original and scenically ingenious. (11/9/92) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

3 from Brooklyn—A comedy-and-music revue conceived by, written by, and starring Sal Richards. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

Words Divine—The Mexican actress Ofelia Medina stars in an English-language adaptation, by Lorenzo Mans, of a 1920 play by the Spanish author Ramón del Valle-Inclán. Max Ferra was the director. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 695-6551. Closes Dec. 13.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATSKILLS ON BROADWAY:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **LOST IN YONKERS:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE SECRET GARDEN:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.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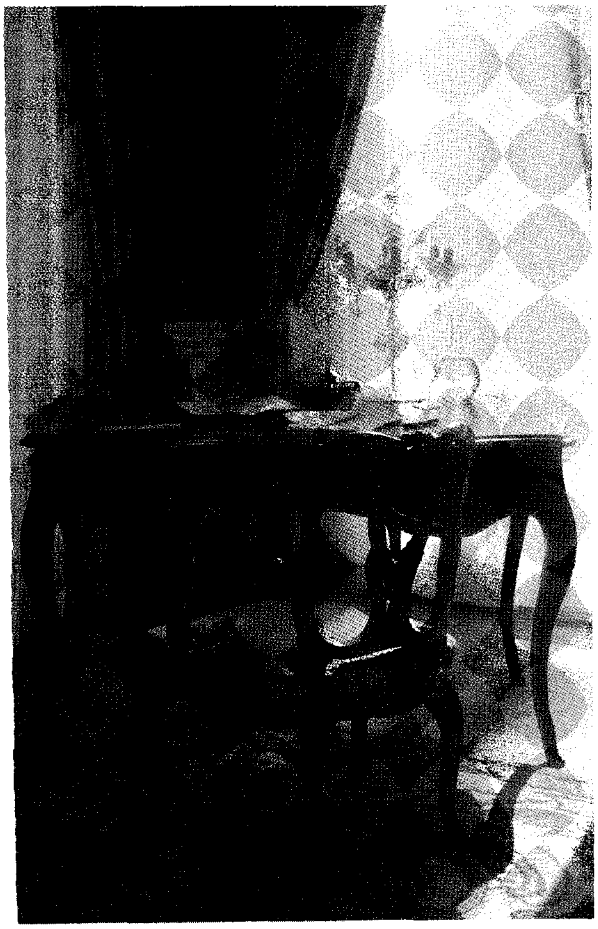

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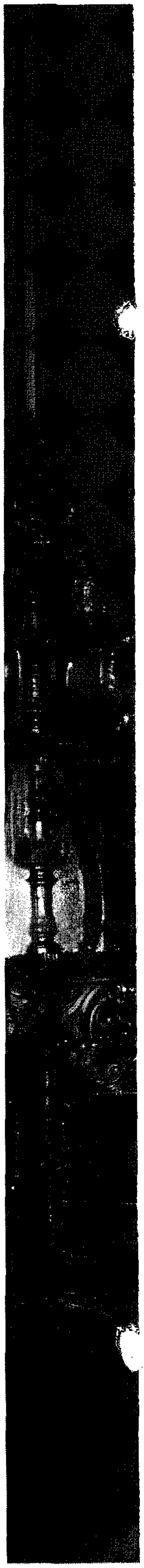

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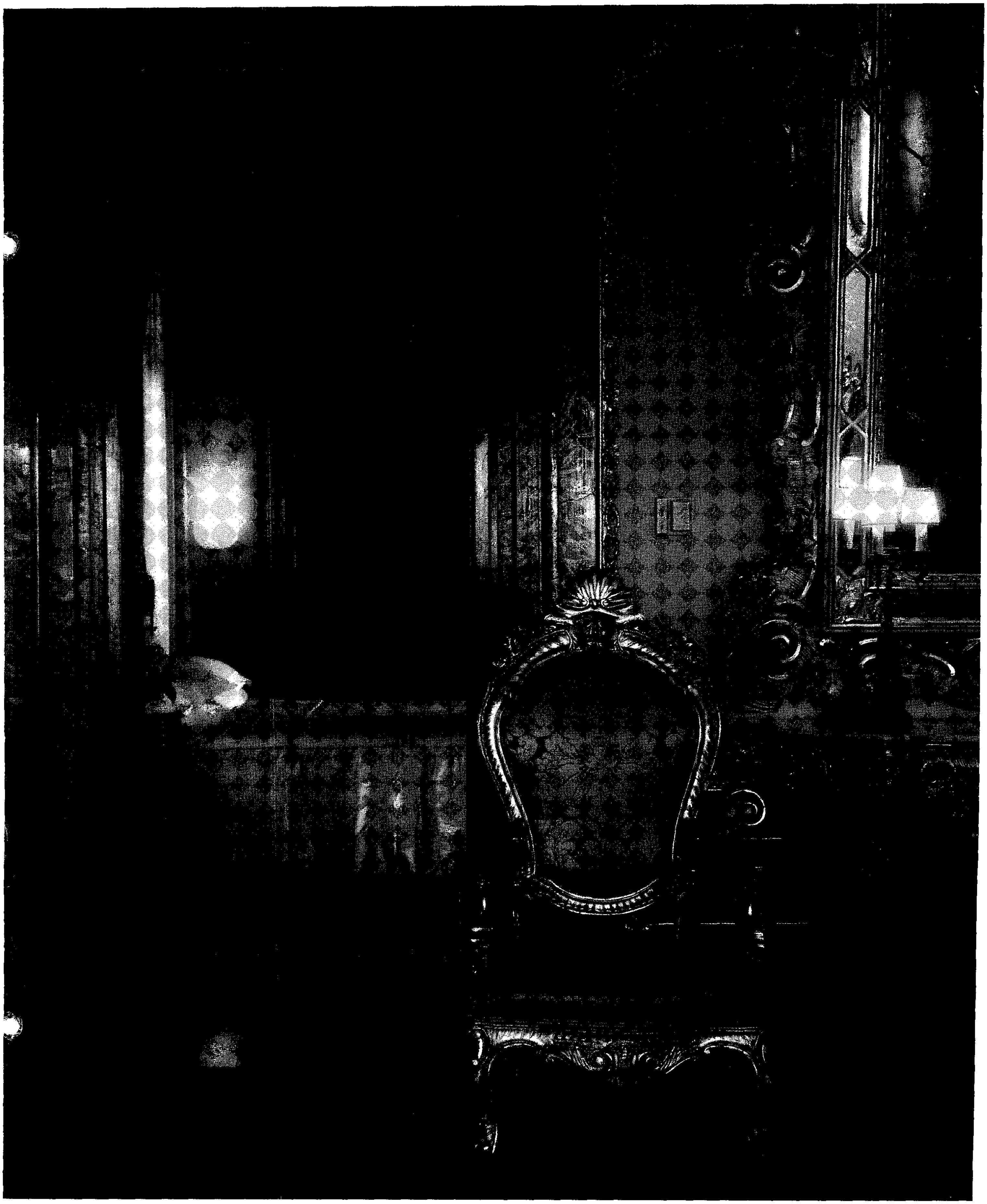

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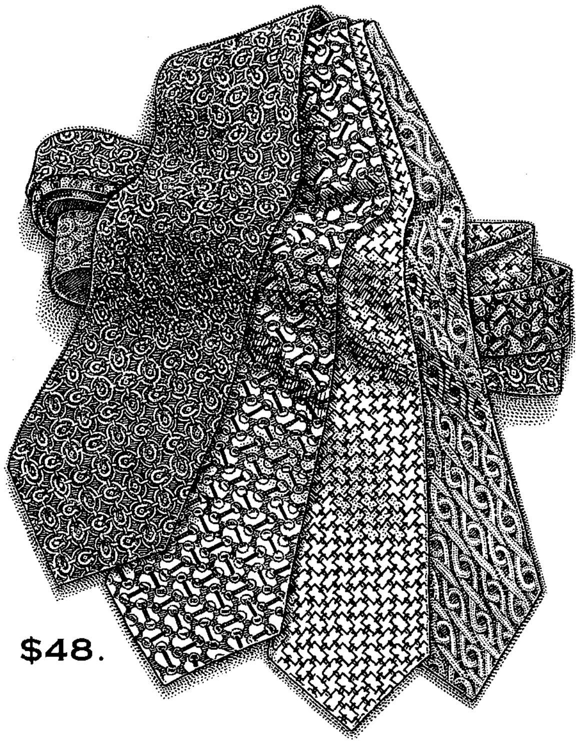

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DANCE

Life with Merce

From her début, in 1953, until her retirement, in 1972, Carolyn Brown was one of the most beautiful dancers in the Merce Cunningham company—and was also Cunningham's most inspiring instrument. In anticipation of a public lecture she'll be giving on November 30, at Hunter College ("Merce Cunningham: Choosing Chance," at 1:10 P.M., in the sixth-floor Studio Theatre, Thomas Hunter Hall, Lexington Avenue at 68th Street), Ms. Brown recently spoke about some of the changes that have taken place in modern dance since she stopped performing. One of them is a product of success: Cunningham himself is busier than ever, and the group now makes so many international tours that the dancers have fewer opportunities to listen to the choreographer and his collaborating composers and designers talk about the philosophy that underlies their work. Furthermore, today's college students—including dance majors—have little knowledge of or interest in the rebellion against narrative dance that occurred in the fifties and sixties, in which Cunningham played so conspicuous a part.

Ms. Brown has witnessed personal changes, too. When the conversation turned to a party held last fall at the Cunningham studio, in memory of John Cage, she recalled that the food had included Cage's favorite tamales (in chicken and vegetarian versions). There were also butter cookies. "You know, I don't remember John being a cookie eater," Ms. Brown said. "Merce was a big cookie eater. But that was in the good old, bad old days, when Merce and John ate steak and salad. They didn't turn vegetarian until after I left."

New York City Ballet—Presenting "The Nutcracker," through Jan. 3. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Nov. 27-28 at 2 and 8; Nov. 29 at 1 and 5; and Dec. 1-2 at 6. The season continues through Feb. 21.)

American Ballroom Theatre—Final performances of a program that includes five new works: "The Silver Screen," "Ballroom," "For You," "Latin," and "Swing." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 24-25 at 8; Nov. 27-28 at 2 and 8; and Nov. 29 at 2.)

Ballet Hispanico—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Dec. 13. Dec. 1 at 7:30 and Dec. 2 at 8: "Stages," "Coda Noche Tango," and the New York première of "El Nuevo Mundo." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

"Split Stream"—A shared-program series, this one with three choreographers: Janine Williams, Chao-hui Chou, and Evelyn Velez. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 27-28 at 8 and Nov. 29 at 3.)

"Fresh Tracks"—A program by seven emerging choreographers. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Dec. 1 at 8.)

Margaret Beals—A two-week season, including, in rotating repertory, "The Teak Room" and "4 Images" (in collaboration with flutist Judith Pearce). (Loft Theatre, 228 West Broadway. 431-3869. Dec. 2 at 7:30. Through Dec. 12.)

NIGHT LIFE

Is It Really So Strange?

ATTENDING a Morrissey concert, you might wonder whether you're seeing a pop star or a faith healer. The sight of fans swarming the stage to plant a kiss or touch a garment has become a regular feature of his shows, so it's no wonder that he had to cut short a recent tour because of exhaustion. But why should anyone expect less of an outpouring? As the leader of the Smiths, Morrissey (who'll be at Limelight on November 24, Roseland on November 25, and the Ritz on November 27) invented a kind of pop for the dispossessed, in which celibacy seemed romantic, misanthropy sounded noble, and self-pity was always good for a few laughs.

The Smiths, however, were a hard act to top, and Morrissey's detractors have often sniped that, whatever the merits of his solo career, he's never found a collaborator to equal his ex-bandmate Johnny Marr. Maybe not, but it hasn't been for lack of shopping around—Morrissey has tried out a variety of musicians and producers. "Your Arsenal," his latest album, is a strong rebound from last year's rather listless "Kill Uncle." In the cover photo, with his shirt open and his tongue hanging out, Morrissey comes dangerously close to looking like a sex symbol. The record opens with two growling rockabilly numbers and later yields a couple of his signature caustic messages couched in seductive pop melodies. Now might be a good time to see him—and feel him.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—"If people really need a fix of torch singing, they'll know where to find me," **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** said recently. The singer's past five seasons here have been such successes that this year the management has crowned her unofficial Oak Room queen. Her sixteen-week run will feature six separate shows, the third of which, "What Is Love," kicks off on Nov. 24. Ms. Marcovicci is a skilled vocalist who gives particular care to lyrical content. And she's a lively raconteur: her patter is sprinkled with allusions to everyone from Dorothy Parker to Nietzsche. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, except Thanksgiving, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty (the late show is called "Just Kern") on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and John Parker, Fridays to the George Stubbs trio and the Freddy Francis trio (who is also there on Saturdays along with Mabel Godwin), and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music begins at approximately nine-thirty.

A-TRAIN, 318 W. 45th St. (974-0500)—A flashy but comfortable new jazz club that features African/Caribbean food, a Bessie Smith mural, and waitresses in black cocktail dresses. During the early evening, small combos play in the bar area; the main events take place on a stage decorated with a bas-relief of the Manhattan skyline. Show times vary.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. It's also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Brazilian singer-songwriter **GILBERTO GIL** is here for the next few weeks. Gil, a hugely influential artist who's been performing for some twenty-five years, recently released a new album, "Parabolic." Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy, two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. The **SONNY PRESTON** trio is in action on Nov. 23. The **BILL LEE** quartet claims Nov. 27-28. Closed Thanksgiving Day. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles that turn a mid-set dash to the rest room into something of a steeplechase. The **STANLEY JORDAN** trio works out Nov. 24-29. The **YELLOWJACKETS** get started on Dec. 1. First set at nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great, black loft that's jammed with row after row of tables—it looks a little like the site of a standardized test. Despite the cramped quarters, though, the Bottom Line is an easy, comfortable place to take in a folk or rock show. Nov. 27-28 belongs to **BUSTER POINDEXTER & HIS BANSHEES OF BLUE.** Show times vary. Closed Thanksgiving Day. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—The art collection in this neighborhood restaurant, bar, and jazz club is a curator's worst nightmare. Fortunately, the musicians who gather round the Steinway each night are usually more harmonious. Saxophonist **ARTHUR BLYTHE,** pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY,** and bassist **SANTI DEBRIANO** are here through Nov. 28. Music from ten. Dining.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—Don't be misled by the sleepy, hole-in-the-wall atmosphere of this bohemian little Irish café, or by the fact that the place has no stage and no music schedule. While patrons have been writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over their Rolling Rocks, some pretty fine musicians have turned up and tuned up: Sinéad O'Connor, Marianne Faithfull, and Luka Bloom, to name a heady few. Music generally begins at about eight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

CLUB 53, Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. (261-5853)—A new cabaret in the New York Hilton. It's a pleasantly lulling spot, where you can sink into deep sofas and eat off of big plates. A musical revue called "Corkscrews!," starring **MIRIAM FOND, TONY LANG,** and **ARTHUR SIEGEL,** is currently on view. The show consists of musical sketches that lampoon city life, from cash machines to sex surrogates. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays (except Thanksgiving) at eight-forty-five, Fridays and Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five.

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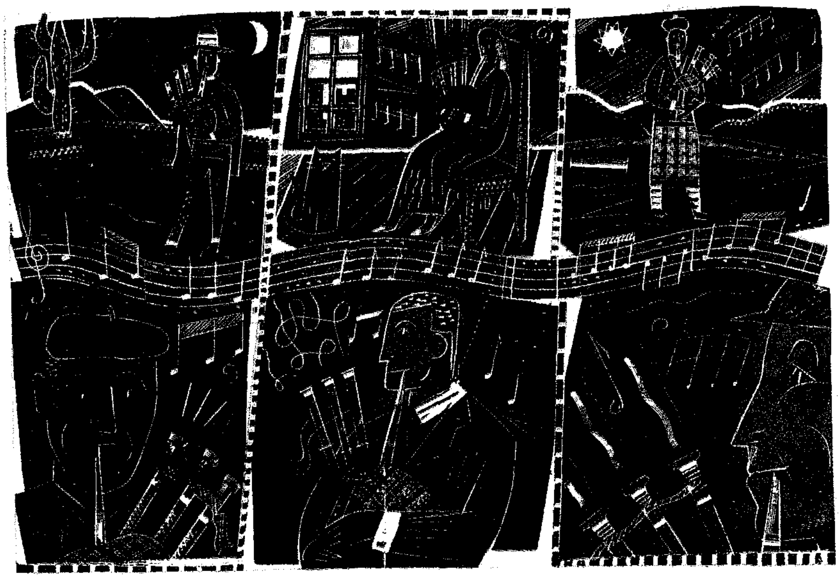

A Bagpipe Festival at the Knitting Factory

JONATHAN GIBBS

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A candlelit basement restaurant within ticket-scalping distance of the Palladium. Perhaps because of its out-of-the-loop location, Condon's is one of the city's more low-key jazz clubs, a place where the seating arrangement doesn't seem intended as some kind of punishment. The **LEE KONITZ** quartet is here through Nov. 29. Music at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Sundays, with late sets at one on Fridays and Saturdays.

CONTINENTAL CLUB, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—This two-floor venue has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off-Off Broadway theatre. Physically, the place is sagging a bit, but it has an odd, dingy charm. **MARY'S DANISH** and the **DARLING BUDS** share a bill on Nov. 24. The latter are a Welsh band who just released their third album, "Erotica." (No relation.) The band's sound is a sort of slap-and-tickle affair: their instruments create a thick, rumbling dream-pop fog with a faint punk edge, on top of which come Andrea Lewis's sweet, airy, Cocteau Twins-ish vocals. Unlike some dream poppers, who can be all atmosphere, this group subtly balances melodic structures with hypnotic repetition. Their music is carefully shaped noise—hazy, transcendent, a chemical-free trip. **PAUL WELLER** performs on Nov. 25, with Jill Sobule; the **LEVELLERS** claim Nov. 28. For concert information, call 249-8870. The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night. The dancers span all ages and shoe sizes, but all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. The **LOREN SCHOENBERG** big band holds forth on Nov. 29. Sets from eight till midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating brown-on-brown bar. The place brightens up considerably at ten, with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

DUPLEX, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—A two-floor entertainment center. The cheery white downstairs bar has French windows giving on to the bustle of Seventh Avenue, but the real clamor is indoors. Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the audience. Pop standards are sung/shouted, usually with altered, risqué lyrics; wisecracks are fired across the room; and everyone laughs too hard. Upstairs, there's a quieter bar and a cabaret, where you'll find a variety of performers nightly.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—Where swordfish leap on almost every wall. Where a cat with black and white spots sometimes walks the length of the bar. Where barbirds stare at football on the tube. And where, between the Sinatra and Streisand songs that emanate from the jukebox, one can often hear snatches of live bluegrass and Irish music floating in from the bright back room. Sets at nine and ten-thirty on Fridays. Sets start at eight on Saturdays.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. The **JOE HENDERSON** quartet is on hand Nov. 24–29; **CHRIS CONNOR** begins work on Dec. 1. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers and mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker is an airy, good-spirited place and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. Nov. 25-28: **RUSS KASSOFF** and **DICK SAPOLA**. From Dec. 2: **STEVE KUHN** and **DAVID FINCK**. Music from nine-forty-five.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—**NEGATIVLAND**, which will be here on Nov. 23, is a California-based trio that's not so much a band as a group of archive-plundering, multi-media pranksters. Their albums, which make liberal use of tape loops and recorded sound bites, are quite funny and inventive, even if some of their targets in the past—the news media, radio programmers, fundamentalist Christianity, the Playboy Channel, disco—have been a bit overworked. Recently, the band got into trouble by releasing a single whose cover read "U2" in huge letters and, beneath it, "Negativland" in fine print. Bono and his lawyers were not amused. In concert, Mark Hosler, who is as close to a front man as a band like Negativland will stand for, has been known to set the mood by tossing out balloons and spraying the crowd with bathroom air freshener. A **BAGPIPE FESTIVAL** takes place Nov. 30–Dec. 1. George Balderose, "the Segovia of the bagpipes," will be on hand, playing traditional Highlands music, but for the most part this gathering will feature artists who adapt the instrument to modern modes, including Battlefield Band, a Scottish rock band; Rawlins Cross, a Canadian rock outfit; Yoshi Wada, a minimalist composer; the Lindsay

Horner quartet, a jazz combo; and the electronic percussionist Samm Bennett. On Nov. 30, the m.c. is—who else?—James Doohan, who played Scotty on "Star Trek." Music, usually, after nine.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—It's named for its Texas décor, but perhaps a more apt name would be the Second Chance, since so many lost, forgotten, or faded rockers turn up here. But the club's busy schedule includes a variety of newer acts, too. **THE BAND** performs here Nov. 27-28; the Kentucky HeadHunters and the World Famous Bluejays claim Dec. 1. Show times vary. Dining.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—This blues bar stands apart from the Upper East Side's usual array of singles bars, and has become a big draw for the neighborhood's army of post-collegiates. Neon beer signs, Manny's caps, and funky drink concoctions lend the place a frat-house aura, but don't let that put you off: this long, dark, brick-walled room is a good spot to catch blues artists both major and minor. Sets from nine-fifteen Mondays through Thursdays, nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays, and eight-forty-five on Sundays.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—As you clean your plate beneath the gaze of Henry VIII, you might imagine yourself in England. But when the lights go down, you're in long-ago New Orleans, where Jelly Roll Morton struts his stuff. **VERNEL BAGNERIS** (a New Orleans native himself) portrays the self-proclaimed inventor of jazz with elegance, verve, and compassion, providing an intimate counterbalance to the psychologically tortured portrayal currently being purveyed on Broadway. Bagneris bases his script on interviews Jelly Roll taped in the thirties, and intersperses virtuosic renditions of sixteen numbers—all packed into little more than an hour. Butch Thompson accompanies him at the keyboard. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There, you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, have to compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. A Jule Styne revue gets under way on Nov. 24. The show, the fifth in this cabaret's well-received series of composer tributes, will feature **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY, DOLORES GRAY, WILLIAM ROY,** and a handful of other worthy performers. Styne, who turns eighty-seven on New Year's Eve, has an imposing list of stage and screen successes, including "Gypsy," "Funny Girl," "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," and on and on. He's still at it, too: aside from having a new musical in the works, he served as creative consultant for this event. Shows at eight and ten-thirty. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Thanksgiving to Samuel Ulano and His Swingers, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, is now the site of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly located in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. **PUBLIC ENEMY, ICE-T,** and **HOUSE OF PAIN** are here on Nov. 23. **MORRISSEY** performs on Nov. 27. Shows at eight.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small, red-gold-and-green cabaret. **MARY CLEERE HARAN** appears on Nov. 29. Shows Sundays at eight and, upon demand, ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

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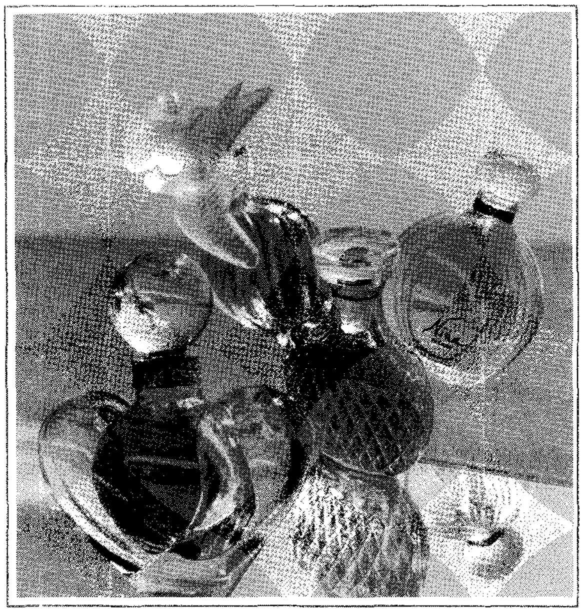

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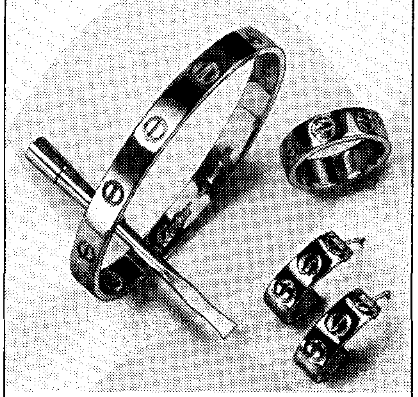

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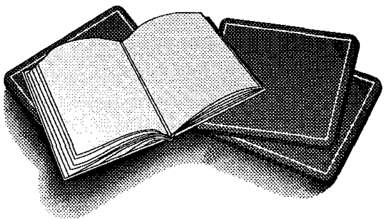

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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

Space at Chase, 98 Third Ave., at 12th St. (475-1407)—One of those East Village joints where, for a few bucks, you can hear a handful of local rock bands. Some of the bands will make you want to cower under the pinball machine while others will make you want to dance and shout and start your own independent label. As for décor, there's a bar, some chairs, some tables, some walls, a ceiling, and two dart boards. Music from nine.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—One seldom sees jazz musicians leaning back to back as they kick out the jams, or craning their necks to harmonize into a mike. That's not to say that they don't interact onstage, but they're usually more subtle about it than rockers are. The nod, the glance, the faint smile are more common gestures, and this brown-toned ski chalet of a jazz club is a fine place to study such group dynamics. **PAUL BLEY, JIMMY GIUFFRE,** and **STEVE SWALLOW** are at work Nov. 24-29; the **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet begins a run on Dec. 1. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is nine. Dining.

Sweetwaters, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, and a sunken dance floor with a circa-1975 mirrored disco ball. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B. acts. **BEN E. KING** is here Nov. 27-28. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, located near what was once called Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. The pillared, loftlike room is decorated in a hodgepodge, vaguely Bourbon Street manner, and sight lines are above average. **YOUSSOU N'DOUR** is appearing on Nov. 29, with Hassan Hakmoun. Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Thanksgiving Day.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." **TERENCE BLANCHARD'S** quintet is here Nov. 24-29. Blanchard, a trumpeter, composer, and arranger, is among the cluster of young jazz stars who've helped revive the genre. He got his start with Art Blakey's group in the early eighties, then left to pursue his own projects, which have included two superb solo records and a number of soundtracks for Spike Lee films. For Lee's latest, "Malcolm X," Blanchard performed double duty: he composed the score and made his acting début. The music from the film is a collection of pensive, sombre jazz suites at times similar in tone to Miles Davis's "Sketches of Spain." Blanchard and his band will perform some of them here. **TONINHO HORTA'S** outfit begins work on Dec. 1. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Home to an endless Summer of Love. Wetlands is a groovy, psychedelic, thoroughly Green night club. It is filled more or less nightly with young bands who like to play long, swirling jams and throngs of young Deadheads who like to listen to them. Young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors got their start here. Music at ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. **GENE BERTONCINI** and **MICHAEL MOORE** are in swing through Nov. 28; **AL LYLES** claims Nov. 30-Dec. 2. Music from eight every night but Sundays, when sets begin at seven-thirty. Closed Thanksgiving Day.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Over the phone, Angelenos will promise you anything. On a recent Thursday, for example, several of them promised to take a New Yorker to the months-old Maxx, claiming that it was the only place to go in L.A. on that night. The group arrived at the destination (6423 Yucca Avenue), but as the head Angeleno handed the club's valet his car keys he began to balk at going out, saying "A club's only hot here for two weeks, and then everyone finds out about it, and since there are exactly five people in town who know who's really who, and they never work a door, because they run the clubs and as soon as theirs is successful they start showing up late and the lines are immediately three blocks long, and since anyone worth seeing wouldn't be caught dead on a line, everybody just gets disgusted and stays home, inducing everyone else who rushed the joint because they wanted to be seen with anyone who should be there in the first place to start hunting for the next new place, so by the time six months is up, any club, good or bad, is doomed, so how about if we go home and rent a movie?" And you thought the problem was that all the glamorous people have an early call in the morning.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Radio City Christmas Spectacular—The sixtieth-anniversary edition of the holiday show includes the Rockettes, of course. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Through Jan. 6. For information about show times and tickets, call 247-4777.)

Big Apple Circus—*Featuring the flying Egorov* Troupe, from Russia; a contortionist named Tunga, from Mongolia; Johnny Peers and his dog act; equestrienne Katja Schumann; two elephants called Anna May and Peggy; and a host of others. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Through Jan. 10. For information about show times and tickets, call 268-0055.)

Walt Disney's World on Ice—This year's version centers on "Beauty and the Beast," but Mickey, Minnie, Donald, et al., will be there, too. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Nov. 24, Nov. 26, and Nov. 29, all at 7:30; Nov. 25 at 10:30 A.M. and 7:30; and Nov. 27-28 at 11 A.M., 3, and 7:30.)

Penny Arcade—In "Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore!" With the works: go-go dancers, nudity, explicit language, and pornographic images. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Fridays and Saturdays at 8.)

Bigg Mess—A performance group consisting of Johanna Went, Stephen Holman, Clam Lynch, and Alien Comic. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Nov. 25 and Nov. 27-29 at 8:30.)

P.S. 122—Nov. 27-29 at 7:30: "The Circle Unbroken Is a Hard Bop," an "epistolary praise poem" by Sekou Sundiata and Craig S. Harris. . . . ¶ Nov. 27-29 at 9: Rock Steady Crew, who were seen in Bill Irwin's 1989 show "Largely New York" and in last summer's "Serious Fun!" festival, present a hip-hop extravaganza. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

La Mama—Nov. 27-29 at 8: "Underground," a work by Theodora Skipitares that uses animated puppet figures. Through Dec. 13. . . . ¶ Nov. 27-28 at 10: "WOMB/man WARS," a one-woman show starring Judith Alexa Jackson. Through Dec. 5. (74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

ART

Trompe l'Oeil

THIRTY saucily surreal little paintings by the all but forgotten French artist Pierre Roy (1880-1950) are currently on view at the Feigen gallery (49 East 68th Street; through January 22), in an exhibition whose opening was purposely timed to coincide with the final days of the Magritte show at the Met. It is the fondest hope of Roy's band of admirers, most notable among them the director and collector Billy Wilder, that they might establish the artist as the true father of Surrealism, superior to the famous Belgian who, in an accompanying catalogue interview, is described (by Wilder) as "gross" and "a lousy painter," and is dismissed (by Richard Feigen) as "a bourgeois."

A fetishistic technician, Roy would first build an elaborate Joseph Cornell-like maquette of a scene, which he would paint from directly and then destroy. His relatively small body of realized work amounts to a veritable lexicon of trompe-l'oeil surfaces and effects. Roy's confectioner's colors, ornamental flourishes, and static imagery recall the eighteenth-century painters Chardin and Oudry, while his still-lifes—beribboned blades of wheat, bundles of asparagus, pineapples, tortoise shells, boxed and pinned faux butterflies resembling bows—suggest the free associations of a great decorator in analysis. But only one painting in this show rivals anything by Magritte. On loan from MOMA, where for years it has been a favorite of children, it depicts an ominously friendly snake descending a staircase: Roy is the society Surrealist par excellence.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang." One often hears how abstraction existed in Chinese art centuries before the advent of Modernism; Tung is the artist who transformed the painter from one who represents to one who paints, and the medium from a record of reality to a vehicle for self-expression. Because of space limitations, this exhibition is being shown in two parts. The first part, currently on view, consists of work by Tung and his contemporaries. Included are examples of Tung's extraordinary landscape painting, which was very close in spirit to Cézanne. Also on view are examples of the artist's precise calligraphy. The second part of the show (which starts Dec. 1) will explore Tung's influence on later generations. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ A display (running concurrently with the Whitney retrospective) of two huge murals that Jean-Michel Basquiat made, in 1985, for the Mike Todd Room, at the Palladium. . . . ¶ "The Royal City of Susa: Ancient Near Eastern Treasures in the Louvre." Two hundred works in copper, bronze, stone, and clay. Through March 7. . . . ¶ The show of paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, includes works by Rubens, Goya, Delacroix, van Gogh, Fra Bartolommeo, and others. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings, drawings, and prints by the Spanish realist Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652). Through Nov. 29. . . . **NOTE:** On Dec. 1, in observance of Day Without Art, red ribbons will be available to visitors, and the museum will remove at least one object from each curatorial department and install a text about the AIDS crisis in its place. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, except Thanksgiving Day, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—The most powerful section of the Matisse retrospective is the one covering the years 1913 to 1917, which is called "Abstraction and Experimentation." A big, subdued, rigorous Jungian masterpiece called "Bathers by a River" (completed in 1916) is the great coup de theatre of this rich but surprisingly unrevealing exhibition. There are, however, some happy rediscoveries, such as a number of Matisse's exercises in bold contours and high style from the early forties—paintings like "The Rumanian Blouse," which may have inspired a collection or two by Saint Laurent, and several still-lifes and interiors with figures against black gridded grounds. Through Jan. 12. (Plan wisely; call 708-9850 for ticket information. Tickets can be purchased in advance, and a limited number of same-day tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis.). . . ¶ "New Photography 8," a show of work by Dieter Appelt, Ellen Brooks, Darrel Ellis, Dennis Farber, Robert Flynt, Mary Miss, Gundula Schulze, and Toshio Shibata. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ A hundred and twenty-five books, by such artists as Giorgio de Chirico, Lucio Fontana, Francesco Clemente, and Giacomo Manzù, are on view in "The Artist and the Book in Twentieth-Century Italy." Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ "The Photographs of Lucas Samaras" comprises thirty works from his many series of Polaroids. Through Dec. 1. . . . **NOTE:** On Nov. 30 at 6:30, in observance of Day Without Art (Dec. 1), the museum will present a program of readings and songs. Performers will include baritone William Parker, writer Allan Gurganus, and performance artist John Kelly. No tickets necessary. (Museum hours through Jan. 12: open Sundays through Tuesdays, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Wednesdays, 12 to 6; Thursdays, except Thanksgiving, 10:30 to 9. Closes at 6 on Thanksgiving Day.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-32." This fertile period is evoked in an eclectic show, comprising experimental paintings of every level of quality, a tantalizing variety of revolutionary posters, textiles, and porcelains, and several superb architectural drawings and models. Through Jan. 3. . . . **NOTE:** Both the uptown and SoHo museums will observe Day Without Art by making red ribbons available to visitors. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—A show of works that Robert Rauschenberg made between 1949 and 1954, before the appearance of the groundbreaking "combines." Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ "Marc Chagall and the Jewish Theatre." Chagall's murals for the State Jewish Chamber Theatre, in Moscow, are in many ways ambitious, but they are not especially satisfying. They are notable for their delicacy, for their mixture of figurative and abstract forms, and for the modest scale of their elements. Through Jan. 17. (Open daily, except Tuesdays and Thanksgiving Day, 11 to 6; Friday and Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Agnes Martin didn't achieve her mature style until the early sixties, when she was in her late forties. Today, she is one of the great living painters, yet her work is so unassuming that she has not attracted the sort of cultish attention given to her fellow desert escapee Georgia O'Keeffe. It is the paradox of Martin's career that she has made soft, delicate paintings in a rigid grid format. Within her narrow vocabulary, Martin explores infinite variation. Though each painting is a perfect distillation of her œuvre,

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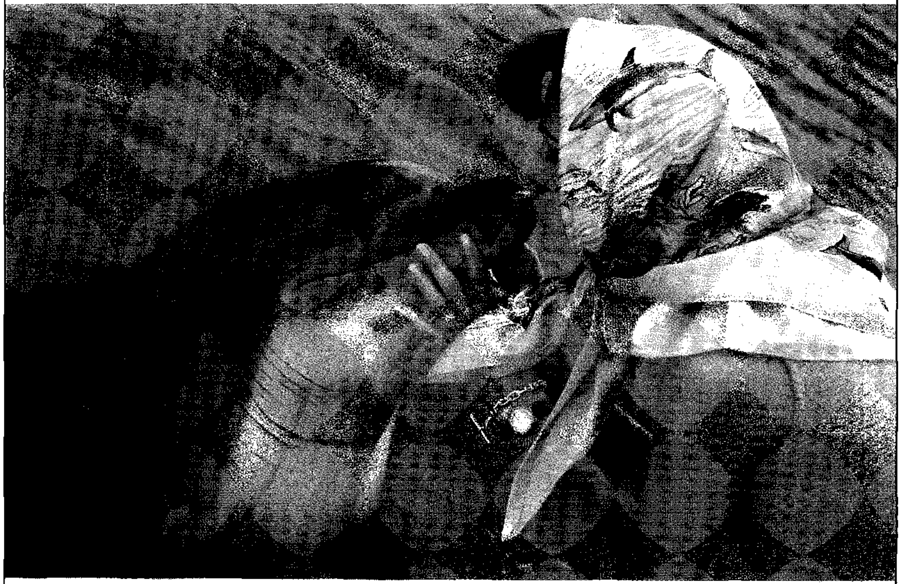

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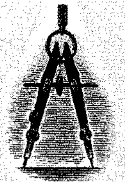

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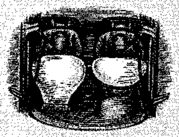

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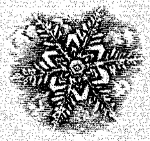

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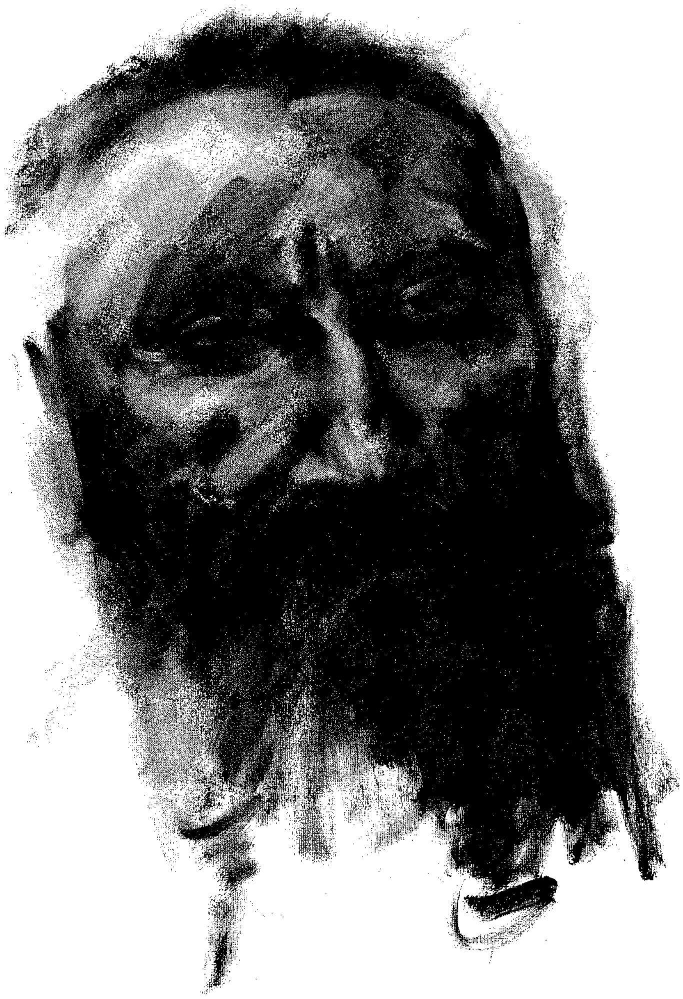
BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Max Weber: The Cubist Decade, 1910-20." Sixty paintings and works on paper by the American modernist. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ Had he survived the Franco-Prussian War, Frédéric Bazille (1841-70) might have held his own with the Impressionists of his generation. This show of sixty-one paintings and works on paper includes most of his œuvre. Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ Sixty sculptures by Auguste Rodin have been reinstalled in the Cantor Gallery. Among the works here are two independent pieces from "The Gates of Hell"; maquettes, studies, and four full-scale figures from "The Burghers of Calais"; and several versions of "Balzac.". . . ¶ "Dame of the Narrows" (1976), a large-scale sculpture of the Staten Island ferry arriving at the Manhattan terminal, by Red Grooms, Mimi Gross, and the Ruckus Construction Company, is currently installed in the lobby. . . . **NOTE:** On Dec. 2, following Day Without Art, several organizations, including Gay Men's Health Crisis, will be present to provide information. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, except Thanksgiving Day, 10 to 5.)



Rodin at the Brooklyn Museum

KRAWCZYK

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two hundred and fifty Soviet porcelain plates, vessels, and sculptures, from the Bolshevik Revolution to *glasnost*. . . . ¶ "From Background to Foreground" examines Jean-Baptiste Réveillon's eighteenth-century wallpaper designs and includes samples of the arabesque pattern, woodblocks, paper, pigment, and decorative objects. . . . ¶ "The Power of Maps." Navigating your way through this huge show of more than four hundred maps (the earliest is from 1500 B.C.) can seem like a daunting task. But be adventurous, and you'll find Native American star charts, Italian globes, Aboriginal "Dreaming" maps, survey maps of the Pyramids, and much more. . . . **NOTE:** In observance of Day Without Art, the museum has organized a show of drawings, prints, textiles, and wall coverings by designers and architects who have died of AIDS. Through Feb. 28. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain." More than a hundred manuscripts, textiles, ceramics, and architectural fragments are on view. Through Dec. 20. . . . **NOTE:** In observance of Day Without Art, the museum will remove one of the centerpieces of the "Convivencia" exhibition: a garden fountain from the Alhambra Palace, in Granada. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, except Thanksgiving Day, 11 to 8; Fridays, 11 to 3.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—Dickens' original manuscript for "A Christmas Carol," a hundred and forty-nine years old this winter, is on display in the entrance hall. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ A large show of drawings by Fra Bartolommeo, including studies for "Vision of St. Bernard" and "Madonna della Misericordia." Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ "Renaissance Florence: Arts and Letters," drawn from the library's collection, features letters by Michelangelo and Machiavelli, an early edition of Dante's "Divine Comedy," and inflammatory pamphlets by Savonarola. Through Nov. 29. . . . **NOTE:** In observance of Day Without Art, the library is presenting "Poems of Love and Loss," a small show of elegiac verse from its collection of manuscripts and letters. Through Dec. 6. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Songs of My People," a hundred and fifty black-and-white photographs of contemporary African-Americans throughout the United States. All the pictures were taken by African-American free-lance and newspaper photographers. Through Jan. 3. (See Photography.). . . ¶ "A Jewish Family in Colonial New York: The Levy-Franks Family Portraits." Three generations of the Levy and Frank families, as seen in these rare seventeen-thirties oil paintings. . . . ¶ "Growing Old in Spanish Harlem," a show of photographs of elderly Latinos and Latinas, accompanied by quotations from the subjects. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—"The Spatial Drive," a show of works concerned with transfers of energy and the differences between actions and objects. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "FluxAttitudes," a large gathering of visitor-activated works by artists related to the Fluxus movement. Through Jan. 3. . . . **NOTE:** On Dec. 1, in observance of Day Without Art, the museum's lobby and Broadway window will be open to the public, and several programs are scheduled: The reinstallation of Robert Farber's sound project "Every Ten Minutes," in which a bell rings six times an hour to signal an HIV-related death in the United States. . . . The artist/activist's collaborative Gran Fury will update the statistics on the L.E.D. sign that accompanies the neon Silence=Death logo, which is installed until the AIDS crisis is over. . . . The museum's staff and members will create an audiotape reading of "The Witness Project," Simon Watson's ongoing list of those lost to AIDS in the arts communities and other fields. . . . The Broadway window will be made into a reception area for the community. Body Positive, a city-based service organization, will use the window as a resource and referral center. Additional materials will be provided by G.M.H.C. . . . The OParty!, an artist's collaborative, will be performing throughout the day. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, except Thanksgiving Day, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Mother Goose in New York," an exhibition of nineteenth-century juvenile books and woodblocks from the presses of McLoughlin Bros. Through Dec. 27. . . . ¶ Nearly two hundred nineteenth-century board and table games—from the Majestic Game of the Asiatic Ostrich to Telegraph Boy to the Checkered Game of Life—in a show called "Victorian Pleasures." Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ Twenty panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt are on view. Organized in collaboration with the NAMES Project Foundation. Through Jan. 3. . . . **NOTE:** In further observance of Day Without Art, on Dec. 1, at 1 and 3, the society will show the Academy Award-winning documentary "Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt." (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, except Thanksgiving Day, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Thanksgiving Day.)

ELLSWORTH KELLY—Kelly, a supreme abstractionist, is also one of the best things ever to have happened to the plant kingdom: his botanical sketches are truly exquisite—as piercingly simple, crystalline, and intense as his nonobjective paintings. Through Nov. 28. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. . . . ¶ A show of new paintings is at Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St., through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ A new installation by Kelly is at Castelli, 420 West Broadway, through Dec. 19.)

SHORT LIST—**WILLIAM BLAKE,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through Dec. 31); **FERNANDO BOTERO,** Weintraub, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (through Nov. 28); **RICHARD DIEBENKORN** and **ANDY WARHOL,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through Dec. 19); **HELEN FRANKENTHALER,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Dec. 17); **WILHELM LEHMBRUCK,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through Jan. 16).

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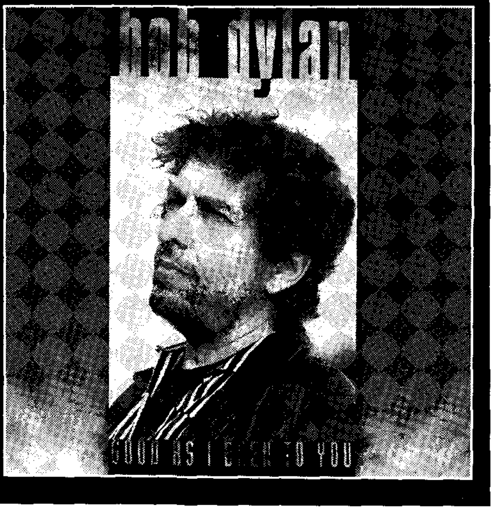

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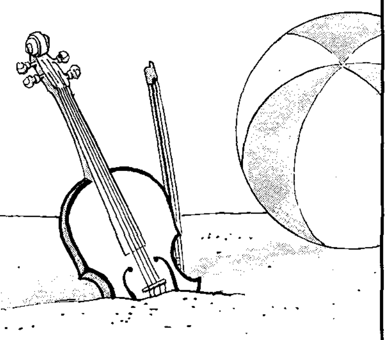

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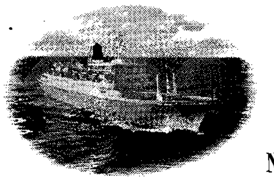

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CUNARD

M54

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

THOMAS EAKINS (1844-1916)—A show honoring the great American realist, by a gallery that has shown his work since the thirties. Virtually all the paintings here are portraits, a genre that gave full scope to the artist's humane meticulousness. Also on display are selections from the extensive Eakins archive maintained by the gallery, including a series of articles and letters related to the fruitless search for the artist's missing portrait of Rutherford B. Hayes (which was considered shocking because it depicted the President in his shirtsleeves) and a letter signed by Thomas Anshutz, a competing realist, charging Eakins with "conduct unworthy of a gentleman" and calling for his expulsion from the Philadelphia Sketch Club. Through Dec. 5. (Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

JACKSON POLLOCK (1912-56)—Small paintings and works on paper from the mid-forties, the period before Pollock's mature Abstract Expressionist phase. Through Nov. 28. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

SHORT LIST—KAREL APPEL, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **JOSÉ BEDIA,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **DEBORAH BROWN,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 1); **STUART DAVIS,** Ulysses, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **DAN GRAHAM,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Jan. 2); **WALT KUHN,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **LOREN MADSEN,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 23); **GIORGIO MORANDI,** Baldacci-Daverio, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **LOUISE NEVELSON,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 28); **DAVID SAUNDERS** and **JOHN GILL,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 5); **ART SPIEGELMAN,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 9); **PAT STEIR,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **TOM WESSELMAN,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Dec. 5).

GALLERIES—SoHo

SAINT CLAIR CEMIN—Some ceramists make impromptu little "kiln gods" out of leftover clay to insure a good firing. The figurines in this show have that aura of serious play. Most of them are so shapeless that the figuration is clear only in the glazing, the content only from the titles. "Worried Veal" is a shuffling calf, and "Karma," naturally, is a tangled mass of figures. These toss-offs, oddly enough, are more satisfying than the artist's larger, more formally ambitious recent works. This show also includes watercolors—comic-book pics and deliberately inept sketchy abstracts of the most vapidly decorative sort. Through Dec. 5. (Kasmin, 74 Grand St.)

RAFAEL FERRER—Rich paintings of people from the Dominican Republic. These are the flip side of Malcolm Morley's island paintings—they're the insider's view. The central image of "Conquista de la Soledad" is a hut engulfed in magical shadows and standing on ground erupting into a post-Cubist mass of life. Over the years, Ferrer's palette has become more narrow, and now it's just as intense in its deep colors as it once was in its tropical lights. Through Dec. 2. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

KENNETH GOLDSMITH—The main work here—six huge columns of silk-screened text on paper—is a tour de force of rap, Beat poetry, and Joycean verse. As the piece progresses, the phrases become longer and the rhythms more complex, until they build to a cacophonous onslaught far more serious-minded than anything the initial playful rhythms seemed to suggest. Through Nov. 28. (Lee, 588 Broadway.)

SIMON LEUNG / ANDREA ZITTEL—A moving installation of "drawings," displayed on shelves, whose images are pierced into the paper with pinpricks. Most of the images are of Hokusai-like waves, and several include storm-tossed sailing ships. Others depict tombstones of sailors from centuries past, or the occasional pair of hands or feet. Their theme is colonization—more sexual than political—and they are beautiful and intense, infused with a rhythmic intoxication. / Zittel has fashioned a tiny yet somehow spacious Aalto-Eamesian living unit, with bed, bath, and kitchen contained in a fifty-square-foot space. Beside it is a pair of uniforms she has designed for artists Gretchen Faust and Kevin Warren, who have agreed to wear them—exclusively—for the next six months. Designed with their wearers' lives in mind, they suggest how a uniform can offer boundless freedom. Through Nov. 28. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

MATT MULLICAN—A beautiful, ethereal installation of signs and symbols. Much of the material in this show is familiar—for example, glass panels etched with various symbols for everything from the mind to nature. Here the panels are presented as interchangeable tabletops, adding an alien functional air. One table is topped with a clear glass sculpture of bubbles within bubbles, a form that symbolizes anatomy. Elsewhere are some computer-generated images that give a sense of what it might be like to walk through Mullican's "The City," of which all his work is a part. Downstairs is a silent film of New York in the thirties, edited by the artist to reveal all the superstructural spines that made the city a city. Through Nov. 28. (The second part of this show starts Dec. 2.) (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

DAVID REED / ALDO ROSSI—Reed has returned to the concept of the diptych with these beautiful, fudgy works made of ribbons of paint in unappealing Mannerist greens and pinks. Through Nov. 28. / A nice show of sketches for such projects as the South Bronx Academy of Art (designed for Tim Rollins + K.O.S.) and EuroDisney's offices. The most engaging of them give a clue to the evolution of form in the architect's work: for example, sketches of a temple, a chair, and an animal skeleton all drawn with a rigid verticality. Through Dec. 12. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

BRENDA ZLAMANY—Paintings of dead animals, most memorably of fish, made using a self-consciously Old Masterish technique, complete with underdrawing and overglazing, by an artist whose sense of the macabre seems to owe something to the nineteenth-century Gothic revival, something to Soutine, and something, perhaps, to the film director David Cronenberg. Zlamany is a master printmaker by trade, and perfectionism shows in her paintings as well. Through Nov. 28. (Donahue, 560 Broadway.)

"TATTOO COLLECTION"—This collection of some two hundred photographs and sketches of tattoos designed by artists is mostly a dud. With so many artists involved, though, there are exceptions, including two maniacally self-referential works: Vito Acconci's effective design for a tattoo of arteries and veins and Jim Shaw's tattoo of the actor Herve Villechaize in his "Fantasy Island" role of Tattoo. Through Nov. 28. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

SHORT LIST—NANCY CHUNN, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through Nov. 28); **JOHN CLEM CLARKE,** Meisel, 141 Prince St. (through Nov. 28); **SONIA DELAUNAY** and **CHARMION VON WIEGAND,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Dec. 5); **LYDIA DONA,** Cugliani, 40 Wooster St. (through Dec. 31); **JIMMIE DURHAM,** Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. (through Dec. 12); **KEITH HARING,** Shafrazi, 130 Prince St. (through Jan. 16); **WILLY HEEKS,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (through Dec. 23); **MIKE KELLEY,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through Jan. 8); **HARRIET KORMAN,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (through Dec. 31); **JULIAN LETHBRIDGE,** Cooper, 155 Wooster St. (through Dec. 3); **ROY LICHTENSTEIN,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Dec. 19); **ANDREW LORD,** 65 Thompson Street Gallery (through Jan. 9); **GIAN MARCO MONTESANO,** Nosei, 100 Prince St. (through Nov. 28); **PHILIP PEARLSTEIN** and **CHRISTOPHER WILMARTH,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 420 West Broadway (through Dec. 5); **MARKUS RAETZ,** Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through Dec. 30); **TONY SMITH,** Cooper, 149 Wooster St. (through Nov. 28); **TOM OF FINLAND,** Leslie-Lohman Gay Art Foundation, 127 Prince St. (through Nov. 28); **ANDY WARHOL,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (through Jan. 9); **MATTHEW WEINSTEIN,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Dec. 19).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Hitting Home

THE Museum of the City of New York (Fifth Avenue at 104th Street) has been packing visitors in for "Songs of My People," an ambitious attempt to record contemporary African-American experience through the works of a heterogeneous group of black photographers. Fifty-three photographers are represented, and the work ranges from the rigorous to the sentimental, from the original to the clichéd, but passion is strong throughout. Perhaps the photograph that best captures the show's affecting spirit is one by Jeffery Allan Salter. The image, which was taken in South Carolina, shows a ponytailed girl holding a softball bat in mid-swing, a look of intense concentration controlling her entire body. Even though the bat is too big for her, she looks so determined that it would be surprising if she didn't connect with the ball.

WEEGEE (1899-1968) / **FREDERICK SOMMER**—At first, these photographs, most of which were taken in the late thirties and early forties, may strike one as utterly dissimilar—Sommer's pictures seem to be all about nature, and Weegee's about what the city brings out in human nature. But what comes through in both men's pictures is a gripping toughness. In Weegee's shots, one witnesses tragedies, accidents, crimes, shocks. And Sommer's landscapes depict the harshness of the natural world, as opposed to something stereotypically beautiful. Through Nov. 28. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

"TROUBLED TIMES. . ."—This show features three artists whose street photography is legendary—Lisette Model, Louis Faurer, and Leon Levinstein—and almost all the works were shot in New York. Model's forties wartime pictures are images of loss, and of emotionally and physically wounded people, and Faurer's images, many of them from the mid-fifties, depict urban down-and-outs. Levinstein's photographs, from the late fifties and early sixties, document the early stages of the urban alienation and abandonment that have become so widespread in the city. Through Dec. 31. (Sander, 105 Hudson St. Closed Tuesdays.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN—"American Legends," an exhibition of recent portraits by Yousuf Karsh, of such people as Cesar Chavez, Dave Brubeck, Jim Henson, and Mother Clara Hale. Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ Early black-and-white work by Ernst Haas. Through Jan. 24. (A complementary show of works by Haas is at Greenberg, 120 Wooster St., through Dec. 5.). . . ¶ "Egyptian Time," a series of photographs by Robert Lyons. Through Nov. 29. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—**SALLY GALL**, Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Dec. 24); **HIROJI KUBOTA**, International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays and Thanksgiving Day, 11 to 6, and Tuesdays until 8; through Jan. 31); **ANNIE LEIBOVITZ**, Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Dec. 5); **ARTHUR LEIPZIG**, Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **NICHOLAS NIXON**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 5); **HERB RITTS**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (through Dec. 5); **LEO RUBINFIEN**, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (open Tuesdays through Sundays, except Thanksgiving Day, 9:30 to 5:15, and Fridays and Saturdays until 8:45; through Jan. 3); **CARRIE MAE WEEMS**, P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Dec. 23).

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MUSIC

Fab Fours

Two string quartets both specializing in new music but almost completely dissimilar in demeanor and programming have become hot tickets. The two are appearing in quite jarring proximity at Alice Tully Hall in the coming weeks. The Arditti Quartet, severe and modernist in outlook, joyously secure in technical and rhythmic command, and famed for its mastery of the fearsome Elliott Carter quartets (which it has recorded on Etcetera compact disks), gives us Kurtág, Janáček, and Reynolds, on November 29. The Kronos Quartet, all multiculturalism and raucousness, devoted to image, punkishly costumed, and inclined to select encores from traditional African music or Jimi Hendrix, plays Golijov, Zhou Long, Daugherty, Gubaidulina, Mackey, and Johnson (heard of any?) on December 5.

The Kronos Quartet is the more catholic, in that on occasion they dip into the hard-modern repertoire of the Arditti. (Sofia Gubaidulina's music could logically turn up on on either group's program.) The Arditti does not venture reciprocally into the vernacular. On this occasion, though, it is venturing into the nineteenth century—Beethoven's "Grosse Fuge." It's a delicious choice: if the Arditti players were looking for the Classical piece that most resembles Carter and Schoenberg, they found it.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**la bohème,** with Gabriela Beňačková, Nancy Gustafson, Luis Lima, and Dwayne Croft; conducted by John Fiore. (Nov. 23, Nov. 27, and Nov. 30, all at 8.). . . **lucia di lammermoor,** in a new production, with June Anderson, Richard Leech, Juan Pons, and Paul Plishka; Marcello Panni. (Nov. 24 at 8 and Nov. 28 at 1:30.). . . With June Anderson, Richard Leech, Haijing Fu, and Paul Plishka; Marcello Panni. (Dec. 2 at 8.). . . **l'elisir d'amore,** with Kathleen Battle, Francisco Araiza, Roberto Frontali, and Enzo Dara; Edoardo Müller. (Nov. 25 at 8.). . . With Kathleen Battle, Francisco Araiza, Mark Oswald, and Enzo Dara; Edoardo Müller. (Nov. 28 at 8:30 and Dec. 1 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Kurt Masur conducting. Nov. 25 and Nov. 27-28 at 8, and Dec. 1 at 7:30: Brahms' "Academic Festival Overture," Liszt's "Mephisto Waltz," Beethoven's Symphony No. 4, and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 2 (with Elisabeth Leonskaja). . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 2: The same program, minus the Tchaikovsky.

New York Concert Singers—Judith Clurman directs a wide-ranging program that encompasses short pieces by Mozart and Haydn (with the assistance of fortepianist Malcolm Bilson), motets by Messiaen and Duruflé, and an abundance of "Alleluias" (by William Bolcom, Libby Larsen, Paul McKibbins, Peter Mennin, Ned Rorem, and Augusta Read Thomas). (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 24 at 8.)

Juilliard Wind Ensemble—Mark Gould conducts music for winds by Strauss, Grainger, Rossini (his "March for the Sultan Abdul Medjid"), Ponchielli (his "Elegy" composed on the death of Garibaldi), and George Antheil (his "A Jazz Symphony"). (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 24 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

"Sacred Music in a Sacred Space"—The choir and orchestra in residence at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola kicks off the holiday season with a performance of Haydn's "Theresienmesse," Schubert's Magnificat, and Vivaldi's familiar Gloria. Kent Tritle directs the ensembles and soloists. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 439-8044. Dec. 2 at 8.)

RECITALS

Chelsea Chamber Ensemble—Presenting music by Martinů, Copland, Dvořák, and James Wintle. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 23 at 8.)

Petras Geniučas—In his first New York appearances, the Lithuanian pianist, who received the top award in this year's Palm Beach Invitational International Piano Competition, plays sonatas by Clementi (in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 25) and Brahms (Op. 1), in addition to Prokofiev's "Sarcasms" (Op. 17), a great handful of Liszt (including a "Csárdás Obstiné," practically his last composition), and four pieces by Berio—"Wasserklavier," "Erdenklavier," "Luftklavier," and "Feuerklavier"—which, though composed over a span of twenty-six years (from 1964 to 1990), obviously constitute an "elemental" cycle of sorts. (Steinway Hall, 109 W. 57th St. 246-1100. Nov. 24 at 7. . . . ¶ Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 28 at 8.)

Hommage à Robert Casadesus—An eminent pianist, composer, and teacher (not to mention a member of a family of notable musicians), Robert Marcel Casadesus evinced a special affinity for music that requires a fluid, delicate touch: Mozart, Chopin, the French turn-of-the-century composers. In fact, in 1924 he became the first pianist to perform an all-Ravel recital (he would later record all of the composer's piano pieces); and, in the same year, he dedicated his own twenty-four Préludes to Ravel. Pianists Grant Johannesen (a Casadesus student) and Jean-Yves Thibaudet (who is in the midst of his own Ravel survey), violinist Henry Gronnier, the duo-piano team of Arianna Goldina and Rémy Loumbrozo, and the Colorado String Quartet will honor Casadesus through a performance of his compositions, twenty years after his death; and his widow, the distinguished pianist Gaby Casadesus, will be on hand to join in the festivities. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Nov. 24 at 8.)

Pre-Turkey Tunes—Carillonneur Joseph Clair Davis rings in the holiday season with traditional American and English melodies. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Nov. 26 at noon. No tickets necessary.)

Bargemusic—Chamber music by Mendelssohn, Dvořák, and Kodály, performed by violinist Nai-Yuan Hu, cellist Ronald Thomas, and pianist Randall Hodgkinson. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Nov. 26 at 7:30 and Nov. 29 at 4.)

Musica Antiqua Köln—The members of this German period-instrument ensemble seem to have mellowed—or at least turned over their wardrobe—since the olden days, when they performed in black leather. In this concert, violinist-violist Reinhard Goebel leads them in works from the dawn of the Baroque (by Giovanni Paolo Cima, Giovanni Rovetta, and Biagio Marini), from several decades later (by Giovanni Battista Vitali), and from the end of the era (by Vivaldi, Tartini, and Pietro Nardini). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 27 at 8.)

Thomas Hampson—The baritone sings (and comments upon) a handful of Mahler's "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" settings, with pianist Craig Rutenberg. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 28 at 7.)

Arditti String Quartet—Performing Beethoven's "Grosse Fuge," Janáček's First Quartet (the "Kreutzer"), György Kurtág's "Officium Breve," and the première of Roger Reynolds' "Visions." (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 29 at 3.)

Pomerium Musicum—Alexander Blachly directs works by Antoine Busnois, who died on November 6, 1492, following an extended stint on the music staff at the Burgundian courts of Charles the Bold and his daughter and successor, Mary. This concert includes his four-voiced "Missa O Crux Lignum Triumphale," several of his other sacred works (a Magnificat, a sequence, a votive antiphon, and two motets for which he seems to have

The Chung Trio

MAXINE BOLL

also written the texts), and a pair of liturgical items by Busnois's colleague (and, some say, teacher) Johannes Ockeghem. Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-0675. Nov. 29 at 4.)

Eliza Garth and Friends—The pianist performs Bartók's "Out of Doors," a sonata by Robert Saxton, an impromptu by David Chaitkin, and the New York première of Katherine Malyj's "Trompe l'Oreille"; clarinettist Jean Kopperud and violinist Rolf Schulte join her for works by Copland, Donald Martino, and Louise Talma. Presented by the League-I.S.C.M. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 30 at 8.)

Julie Mech—The pianist continues her Schumann survey by playing his "Kreisleriana," "Études Symphoniques," and A-Minor Violin Sonata (the last with Robert Lawrence). (Bösendorfer Center, 406 E. 79th St. Nov. 30 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Jeffrey Siegel—In a conversational concert, the pianist promises to reveal "fascinating secrets in the lives of Robert and Clara Schumann," to which titillation he will add performances of Schumann's "Carnaval" and "Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Dec. 1 at 8.)

Festival Chamber Music Society—A downstream convocation of the folks who make music in Dobbs Ferry every June, here performing the New York première of Paul Ben Haim's "Serenade for Flute and String Trio" (written in 1953, and featuring flutist Eugenia Zukerman), Mozart's Clarinet Quintet (with clarinettist Paul Green), and Dvořák's A-Major Piano Quintet (with pianist David Oei). (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 1 at 8.)

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—The flutist and the harpsichordist consider the twilight of the ancien régime through readings of letters and other documents and by performing music by Rameau, Jean-Baptiste Forqueray, Louis-Claude Daquin, and Jacques Duphly (who died the day after the Bastille fell). (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Dec. 2 at 6. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.)

Quintet of the Americas—The woodwind ensemble (plus pianist Henry Lowinger) plays music by Afro-Caribbean composers José Bernardo, Ernesto Lecuona, Tania León, Edward (Kid) Ory, and Roberto Sierra. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950, ext. 357. Dec. 2 at 7.)

Chung Trio—When headline soloists join forces for a chamber-music recital, one often suspects that it's thanks to the confluence of airline schedules, rather than to any long-standing reflection and experimentation on the part of the musicians. But when the stars happen to have grown up under the same roof, such concerns would seem largely unwarranted. Violinist Kyung-Wha Chung, cellist Myung-Wha Chung, and their brother, the pianist Myung-Whun Chung (more active these days as musical director of the beleaguered Paris Opéra-Bastille) effect a family reunion (far from their native Korea) that will make room for trios by Beethoven (in B-Flat, Op. 11, and in D Major—the "Ghost"—Op. 70, No. 1) and Brahms (in B Major). (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Dec. 2 at 8.)

Friends & Enemies of New Music—Tenor Paul Sperry and baritone André Solomon-Glover join the ensemble in a concert that includes works (some of them premières) by Ned Rorem, Ben Yarmolinsky, Nancy Gunn, Tom Cipullo, and Daron Hagen (whose opera "Shining Brow," dealing with the stormy relationship between Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, will be scrutinized by both musicians and architects when it is unveiled in Madison, Wisconsin, in April). (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Dec. 2 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Musicians Against AIDS—On Dec. 1, the many organizations participating in Day Without Art will suspend their activities for a day as a reminder that AIDS continues to wreak havoc among the ranks of artists, performers, arts administrators, and other members of the creative community. The following evening, the Downtown Chamber and Opera Players, directed by Mimi Stern-Wolfe, will break their silence with a concert of remembrance, featuring works by four contemporary composers (Chris DeBlasio, Lee Gannon, Fred Hersch, and Kevin Oldham) as well as by four whose voices have been stilled by AIDS (Robert Chesley, Calvin Hampton, Mark Kyrkostas, and William Turner). (Middle Collegiate Church, Second Ave. at Seventh St. Dec. 2 at 8. For information about tickets, call 477-1594.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Alice in Chains—This band combines death-obsessed heavy-metal predilections, late-eighties Seattle-scene roots, and a history of deportment that would make Axl Rose or Keith Richards proud, all wrapped in a highly marketable package that is starting to pay off for Columbia Records, which arrived late in the sign-a-Northwest-band sweepstakes. (The group's appearance in the movie "Singles" also helped.) But this is not a band that's easy to love, and only time will tell whether they are actually as good as, say, Metallica—or merely as fang-baring as Ted Nugent. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 24 at 8.)

The Winans One-Family Holiday Tour—The perfect day-after-Thanksgiving event: a gospel concert by the Winanses has all the ambience of a huge family reunion—family including yourself. Mom Delores and Pop David deliver the old-time stuff; Marvin, Carvin, Michael, Ronald, BeBe, CeCe, Daniel, Angelique, Debra, and David, Jr., give it an update. Standing Room Only means something different here. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Nov. 27 at 8.)

Dizzy Gillespie—With James Moody, Paquito d'Rivera, Jon Faddis, and the Mike Longo trio in a concert associated with the Bahá'í World Congress. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 25 at 8.)

Pat Metheny—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Nov. 25 and Nov. 27-29 at 8.

Arlo Guthrie—Carnegie Hall. Nov. 27-28 at 8.

Keith David—Manhattan Class Company, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765. Nov. 27-28 at 11:30 P.M.

Ann Rupel and No Safety—Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway. Dec. 2 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Vs. the Kansas City Chiefs, Nov. 29 at 1.

Knicks—Vs. the Washington Bullets, Nov. 24 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Bulls, Nov. 28 at 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Portland Trail Blazers, Dec. 1 at 7:30.

Nets—Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, Dec. 2 at 7:30.

Rangers—Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Nov. 23. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Nov. 30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Detroit Red Wings, Dec. 2. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Nov. 28. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Dec. 1. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Toronto Maple Leafs, Dec. 1 at 7:35.

(The Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. For tickets, call 1-516 538-6600. The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. Post time on Thanksgiving Day is 11. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, at 7:30. . . . **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays, except Thanksgiving Day, at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45.

THE BOFFINS BAFFLED

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But let us take our cue from a party of scientists whom we once invited to explore the matter. '*Magic!*' they exclaimed, swigging their drams in a most unboffinly manner. 'But magic is merely undiscovered science and we'd like to take some home *for further investigation.*'

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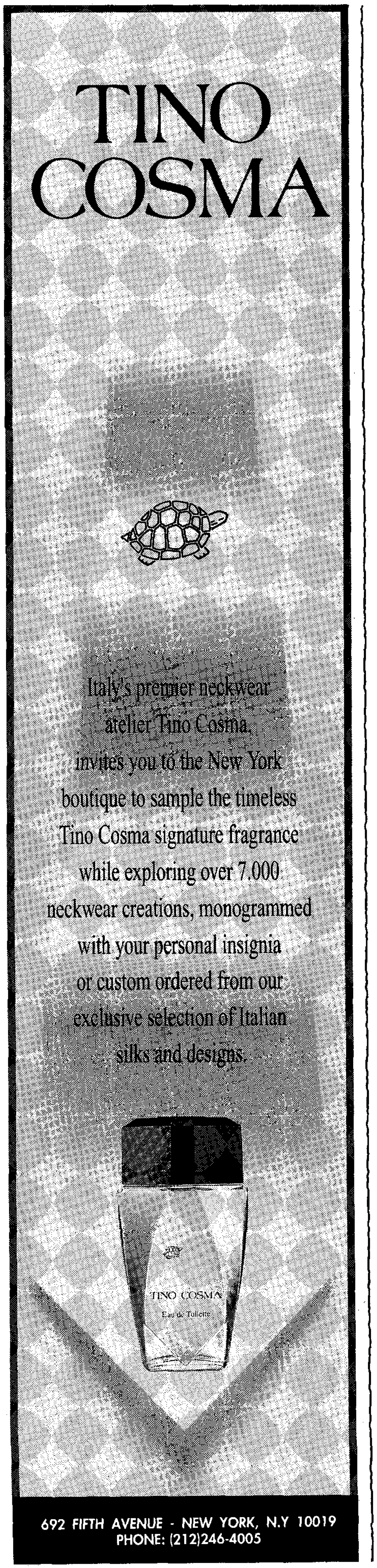
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ABOVE AND BEYOND

Day Without Art—For the fourth year in a row, Dec. 1 will be a day to remember those who have died from AIDS and to support those who are living with AIDS. The lights on major buildings, bridges, and city landmarks in New York will be dimmed from 7:45 to 8; various museums will shroud art works and provide AIDS literature; and some thirty-five cable stations will go black for sixty seconds at 8. Individuals are encouraged to take six inches of red ribbon, cross the ends in an inverted V, and, in a gesture of support, pin on this universal symbol of hope for people with AIDS. Other related events: At 6: David B. Feinberg and John Weir will talk about fiction, humor, and AIDS. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For reservations, call 930-0571.). . . ¶ At 6:30: Epidemiologist Eugene Drucker will talk about mapping AIDS in New York City. (Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ At 7 and 10: Charles Busch will host a benefit fashion show of red-ribbon-inspired clothing. There will be performances, too. (Artists Space, 223 West Broadway. 226-3970.)

Mum's the Word—Lots of chrysanthemums are on view through Nov. 29 at the New York Botanical Garden's fall flower show. For more information, call 220-8700.

Let's Talk Turkey—White or dark? But first, on Thanksgiving eve, from about 6 to midnight, take in the blowing up of the gigantic balloons, near the American Museum of Natural History. The parade starts at 9 A.M. on Nov. 26: watch as Mickey, Goofy, and friends float down Central Park West, from 77th St., until they come to rest at Broadway and 34th St., in front of Macy's, the sponsors of the parade. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 10:30: The fourteenth annual Turkey Trot, a five-mile run sponsored by the New York Road Runners Club, which leaves from the Park Circle in Prospect Park. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 3: Walk through what the Manhattan Indians called Sapokanican (we know it as Greenwich Village), sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. For information, call 265-2663. . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 7: Native American songs, dances, poetry, and ceremonies in "A Giving of Thanks." (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 9:30: Thirteen-mile walk from South Ferry to the George Washington Bridge, sponsored by Shorewalkers. For more information, call 260-6694 or 663-2167.

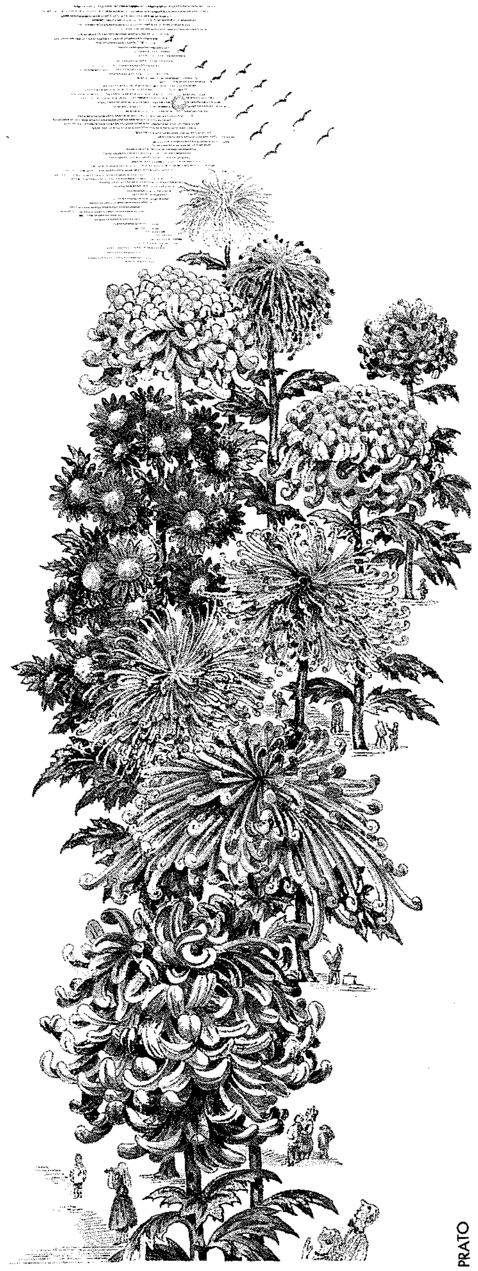
Think Rinks—They're outdoors, open, and ready for ice skaters of all shapes, sizes, and abilities: Wollman Rink is at the south end of Central Park (enter at 60th St. and Fifth Ave.); Rockefeller Plaza is at 50th St. and Fifth Ave.; and Rivergate Rink is at 34th St. and First Ave. Brooklyn skaters will find their Wollman Rink in Prospect Park, just north of Prospect Lake.

One Fish, Two Fish—The American Museum of Natural History has organized a catch-and-release striped-bass fishing trip for Nov. 27 at 11, leaving from South Street Seaport. To register, call 289-3605.

Words—Nov. 30 at 8: Thom Gunn and Sharon Olds will read from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 7:30: Linda Gregg and Gerald Stern will read from their own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 8: Donna Tartt will read from her novel, "The Secret History." (Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Ave., at 92nd St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 8:15: August Kleinzahler, Jim Powell, and Mark Rudman will read from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 2 at 6: Irving Feldman and Alicia Ostriker will read from their own poetry. (French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 2 at 7: Edward Hirsch, Elizabeth Macklin, and Michael S. Weaver will read from their own poetry. (Poetry Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park S. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Talks—Nov. 29 at 2: Oren Lyons, Chief of the Onondaga Nation and SUNY professor, will speak about the connections between Native American art and philosophy and environmental issues. (Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park. No charge beyond museum admission.). . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 7: Lady Kier Kirby, Todd Oldham, and Darius James will be among those appearing at "Hiccup: A Pop Culture Symposium." (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the presentation.)

Walk—Nov. 29 at 1: Visit the landmarks of Mark Twain's New York, to commemorate the author's hundred-and-fifty-seventh birthday. Sponsored by the Mark Twain Association of New York. For information, call 242-5546.



Chrysanthemums at the New York Botanical Garden

RODICA PRATO

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 35.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Enchanted April" (directed by Mike Newell).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 24: "Swoon" (Tom Kalin). From Nov. 25: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 3: "In the Soup" (Alexandre Rockwell).
Theatre 4: "My New Gun" (†).
Theatre 5: "Simple Men" (Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke and William Sage.
Theatre 6: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Nov. 23: Theatre closed.
Nov. 24-25: (Separate admissions) "The Heart of the Forest" (1978, Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón; in Spanish), "The Most Beautiful Night" (1984, Gutiérrez Aragón; in Spanish), and "Rage" (1979, Iván Zulueta; in Spanish).
Nov. 26: Theatre closed.
Nov. 27: (Separate admissions) "Paper Tigers" (1977, Fernando Colomo; in Spanish), "The Year of Awakening" (1986, Fernando Trueba; in Spanish), and "Run for Your Life" (1988, Vicente Aranda; in Spanish).
Nov. 28-29: (Separate admissions) "The Disenchantment" (1975, Jaime Chávarri; in Spanish), "Paper Tigers," "The Year of Awakening," and "Run for Your Life."
Nov. 30: Theatre closed.
From Dec. 1: (Separate admissions) "Maravillas" (1980, Gutiérrez Aragón; in Spanish), "Boom Boom" (1990, Rosa Vergés; in Spanish), and "A Time of Silence" (1985, Aranda; in Spanish).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 24: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 24: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†). From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard."
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 4: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
Theatre 5: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 6: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 7: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Johnny Stecchino" (Roberto Benigni, in Italian), with Benigni.
Theatre 2: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Brief History of Time" (Errol Morris), a documentary.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 24: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey. From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 6: "Becoming Colette" (Danny Huston), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
Theatre 7: "The Panama Deception" (Barbara Trent), a documentary.

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 24: "Blade Runner" (1982, Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.
Theatre 3: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.
Theatre 4: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 24: "Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen). From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Bob Roberts" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Of Mice and Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "Gas Food Lodging" (Allison Anders).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 24: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey. From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 4: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.
Theatre 3: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal.

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Becoming Colette" (Danny Huston), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
Theatre 2: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Bob Roberts" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 2: "Passenger 57."

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Unforgiven" (Clint Eastwood).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Hero" (Stephen Frears), with Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis, and Andy Garcia.
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 3: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell).

Art East Cinema, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
"Venice/Venice" (Henry Jaglom).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 4: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi.
Theatre 5: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 6: "Mr. Saturday Night" (Billy Crystal).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 24: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Johnny Stecchino" (Roberto Benigni, in Italian), with Benigni.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 24: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.
Theatre 4: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 5: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 24: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard."
Theatre 7: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 24: "Bob Roberts" (†). From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 1: "To Render a Life" (directed by Ross Spears), a documentary. From Dec. 2: "Daddy and the Muscle Academy" (Ilppo Pohjola, in English and Finnish) and "Time Expired" (Danny Leiner).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "8 1/2" (1963, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni, Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi.
Theatre 2: "Of Mice and Men" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Damned in the USA" (Paul Yule), a documentary.
Theatre 2: "The Quarrel" (Eli Cohen).
Theatre 3: "Van Gogh" (Maurice Pialat, in French), with Jacques Dutronc.
Theatre 4: "Bob Roberts" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi.
Theatre 4: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 7: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 8: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 9: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Nov. 24: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Bob Roberts" (†).
Theatre 2: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi.
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 4: "Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen).

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: "Of Mice and Men" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Mr. Saturday Night" (Billy Crystal).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Flirting" (John Duigan).
Theatre 2: "The Efficiency Expert" (Mark Joffe), with Anthony Hopkins.

Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Lover" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins.

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through Nov. 24: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
From Nov. 25: "The Crying Game" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Gérard Depardieu, Anne Brochet, and Guillaume Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "The Match Factory Girl" (Aki Kaurismaki).
Theatre 3: "Waterland" (†).
Theatre 4: "Intervista" (Federico Fellini, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.
Theatre 5: "Tous les Matins du Monde."
Theatre 6: "Close to Eden" (Nikita Mikhalkov, in Russian).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 24: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (directed by Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.
Theatre 2: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia.
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 4: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 24: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey. From Nov. 25: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 24: "Malcolm X" (†). From Nov. 25: "A River Runs Through It" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hero" (Stephen Frears), with Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis, and Andy Garcia.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (directed by Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 24: "Candyman" (Bernard Rose), with Virginia Madsen and Tony Todd. From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard" (Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston.
Theatre 4: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 24: "Love Potion #9" (Dale Launer). From Nov. 25: "The Bodyguard."
Theatre 7: "Passenger 57."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Sarafina!" (Darrell James Roodt), with Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 2: "Hero" (Stephen Frears), with Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis, and Andy Garcia.
Theatre 3: "The Mighty Ducks" (Stephen Herek), with Emilio Estevez.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through Nov. 26: "All About Eve" (1950, directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Bette Davis and Anne Baxter.
Nov. 27-29: "A Letter to Three Wives" (see page 35); and "People Will Talk" (1951, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Cary Grant and Jeanne Crain.
Nov. 30-Dec. 1: "No Way Out" (1950, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Richard Widmark, Linda Darnell, and Sidney Poitier; and "Fury" (1936, Fritz Lang), with Spencer Tracy and Sylvia Sidney.
From Dec. 2: "House of Strangers" (1949, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Edward G. Robinson, Susan Hayward, and Richard Conte; and "Somewhere in the Night" (1946, Mankiewicz), with John Hodiak.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Nov. 23: "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned"; 1950, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish); and "Viridiana" (1961, Buñuel; in Spanish).
Nov. 24: "Golden Earrings" (1947, Mitchell Leisen), with Marlene Dietrich and Ray Milland; and "Morocco" (1930, Josef von Sternberg), with Dietrich and Gary Cooper.
Nov. 25: "No Way to Treat a Lady" (1968, Jack Smight), with Rod Steiger, Lee Remick, and George Segal; and "Dressed to Kill" (1980, Brian De Palma), with Michael Caine.
Nov. 26: "Stardust Memories" (1980, Woody Allen) and "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex" (1972, Allen).
Nov. 27-28: "Beauty and the Beast" (†); and "Black Orpheus" (1959, Marcel Camus; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese), with Marpessa Dawn.
Nov. 29: "Jules and Jim" (1962, François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre; and "The 400 Blows" (1959, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
Nov. 30: "The Seven Samurai" (1954, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.
Dec. 1: "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" (1967, David Swift), with Robert Morse, Michele Lee, and Rudy Vallée; and "The Producers" (†).
Dec. 2: "Ministry of Fear" (1944, Fritz Lang), with Ray Milland, Marjorie Reynolds, and Dan Duryea; and "The Fallen Idol" (1948, Carol Reed), with Bobby Henrey, Ralph Richardson, and Michèle Morgan.

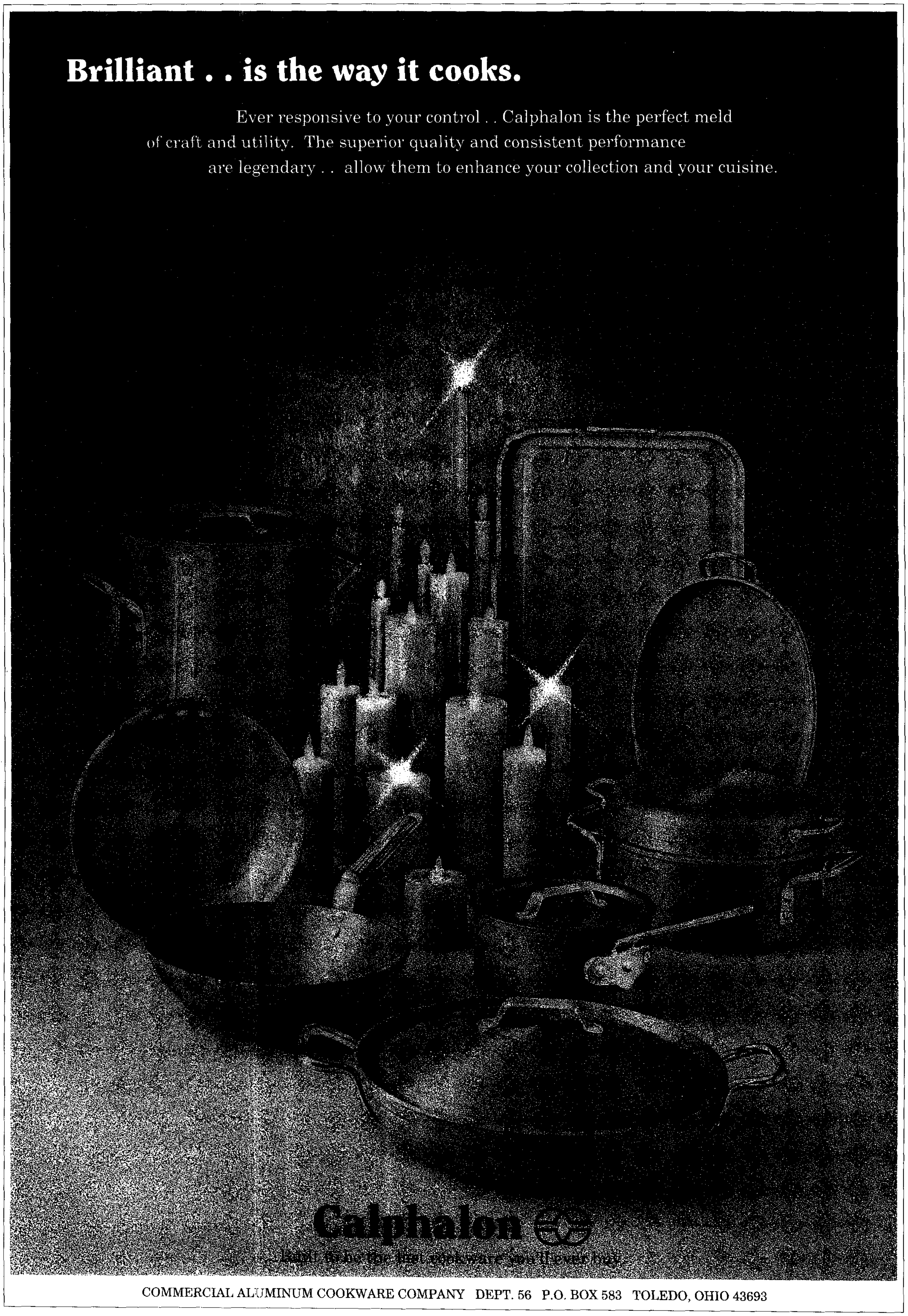
FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Tuesdays through Sundays (except Thanksgiving Day) at 2: "The Meeting" (1989, directed by Bill Duke), with Dick Anthony Williams, Jason Bernard, and Paul Benjamin. . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 6:30: "True West" (1984, Allan Goldstein), with John Malkovich and Gary Sinise.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Nov. 26 at noon: "Old Acquaintance" (1943, Vincent Sherman), with Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 3: "Dark Victory" (1938, Edmund Goulding), with Davis, George Brent, and Geraldine Fitzgerald. . . . ¶ Nov. 27-29 at 12:30: "France" (1978, Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville; in French). . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 2:30 and Nov. 29 at 2: "The Adventures of Robin Hood" (1938, Michael Curtiz and William Keighley), with Olivia de Havilland, Errol Flynn, and Alan Hale. . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 3: "Comment ça Va" (1976, Godard and Miéville; in French). . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 6 and Nov. 29 at 5: "Young Man with a Horn" (1950, Curtiz), with Kirk Douglas and Lauren Bacall. . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 6: "King Lear" (1988, Godard). . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 2 and Nov. 30 at 6: "My Dream Is Yours" (1949, Curtiz), with Jack Carson, Doris Day, and Lee Bowman. . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 3: "Grandeur et Décadence du Petit Commerce de Cinéma" (1986, Godard; in French) and "Soft and Hard" (1986, Godard and Miéville; in French). . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 5 and Nov. 30 at 2:30: "I'll See You in My Dreams" (1951, Curtiz), with Day, Danny Thomas, and Frank Lovejoy. . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 5: "Ici et Ailleurs" (1974, Godard and Miéville; in French). . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 3: "Détective" (1985, Godard; in French), Nathalie Baye, Claude Brasseur, Johnny Hallyday, and Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 5: "Histories du Cinéma" (1989, Godard; in French). . . . ¶ Nov.

Bill Duke, the director of "The Meeting" (Museum of Television and Radio)

FRANCIS LIVINGSTON



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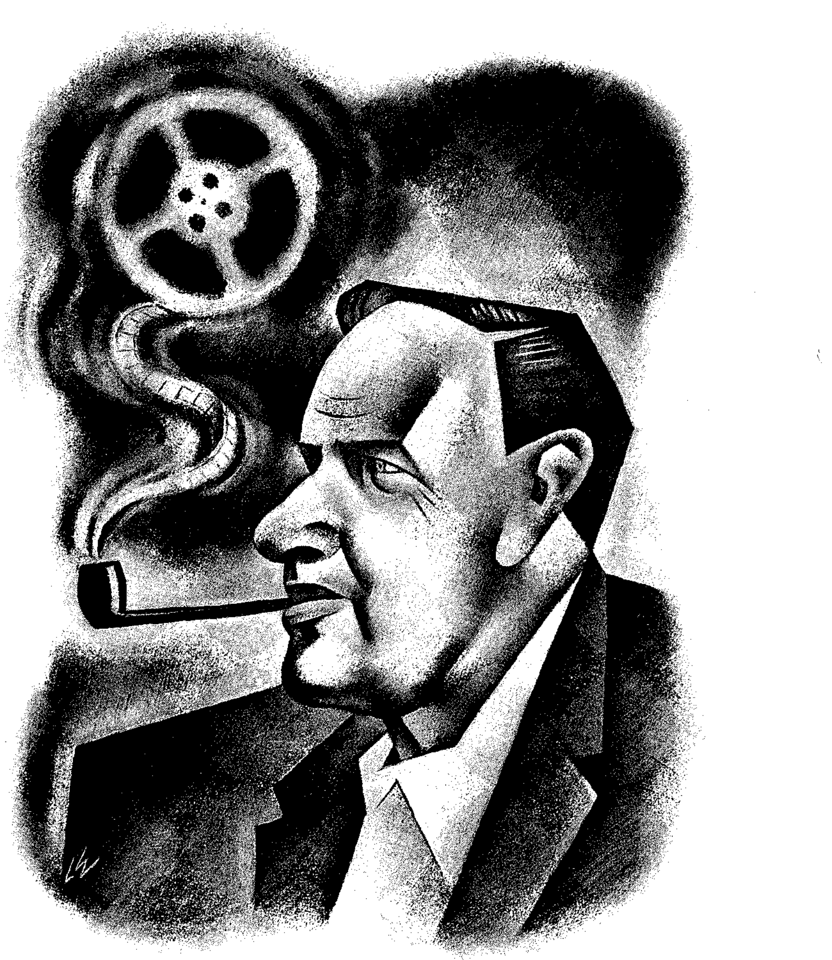


Joseph L. Mankiewicz

30 at 3: A program of short films by Godard, 1982-90. . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 6: "Scénario du Film 'Passion' " (1982, Godard; in French); and "Passion" (1982, Godard; in French), with Isabelle Huppert, Hanna Schygulla, and Laszlo Szoba. . . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 2:30: "Wege des Schreckens" (1921, Curtiz; an Austrian silent film); and "The Road to Happiness" (1926, Curtiz; an Austrian silent film), with Lili Damita and Nils Asther. . . . ¶ Dec. 1 at 6: "Sodom and Gomorrah" (1922, Curtiz; an Austrian silent film, with German intertitles).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Nov. 25 at 2, 5:45, and 9:30: "Pay Day" (1922), "Shoulder Arms" (1918), and "The Pilgrim" (1923), all with Charlie Chaplin. . . . ¶ Nov. 25 at 4 and 7:45: "The Kid" (1921, Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin and Jackie Coogan. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 2 and 6:45 and Nov. 30 at 5:45: "The Gold Rush" (1925, Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin, Mack Swain, and Georgia Hale. . . . ¶ Nov. 26 at 4:15 and 9 and Nov. 30 at 8: "The Great Dictator" (1940, Chaplin), with Chaplin, Paulette Goddard, and Jack Oakie. . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 2 and 6:15: "Monsieur Verdoux" (1947, Chaplin). . . . ¶ Nov. 27 at 4:15 and 8:30: "A King in New York" (1957, Chaplin). . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 2, 5:30, and 9 and Dec. 1 at 4:45 and 9:15: "A Woman of Paris" (1923, Chaplin; silent), with Edna Purviance, Adolphe Menjou, and Carl Miller. . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 3:45 and 7:15: "City Lights" (1931, Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin, Virginia Cherrill, and Harry Myers. . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 2 and 6:30 and Dec. 1 at 2 and 6:30: "Limelight" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 4:45 and 9:15 and Nov. 30 at 2: "Modern Times" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 30 at 3:45: "The Circus" (1928, Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin.

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Nov. 25 at 12:30 and 6: "La Belle Noiseuse" (1991, Jacques Rivette; in French), with Michel Piccoli, Emmanuelle Béart, and Jane Birkin.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, 200 Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—"Hollywood on Trial: Films from the Blacklist Era." Nov. 28 at 2: "High Noon" (†). . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 2: "It Came from Outer Space" (1953, Jack Arnold), with Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake, Russell Johnson, Joe Sawyer, and Kathleen Hughes.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A program of films by Jonas Mekas. Wednesdays at 1: "Guns of the Trees" (1962), "The Brig" (1964), and three short films. . . . ¶ Thursdays at 2: "Walden" (1969), and five short fims. . . . ¶ Fridays at 1: "Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania" (1972) and "Lost, Lost, Lost" (1976). . . . ¶ Saturdays at 1: "In Between: 1964-68" (1978), "Notes for Jerome" (1978), "Paradise Not Yet Lost" (1979), and two short films. . . . ¶ Sundays at 1: "He Stands in a Desert Counting the Seconds of His Life" (1969-85), "Scenes from the Life of Andy Warhol" (1990), "Scenes from the Life of George Maciunas" (1992), and two short films.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"The Legendary Film Scores of Bernard Herrmann." Nov. 28 at 2: "A Christmas Carol" (1954), a television film, with Fredric March and Basil Rathbone. . . . ¶ Nov. 28 at 4: "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" (1947, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney, Rex Harrison, George Sanders, Edna Best, Vanessa Brown, Anna Lee, Robert Coote, and Natalie Wood. . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 2: "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad" (1958, Nathan Juran), with Kerwin Mathews, Kathryn Grant, and Richard Eyer. . . . ¶ Nov. 29 at 4: "Vertigo" (1958, Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Kim Novak, and Barbara Bel Geddes.

92ND STREET Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100)—Nov. 24 at 7:45: "Music Box" (1989, Costa-Gavras), with Jessica Lange, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Frederic Forrest, and Lukas Haas. Screenwriter Joe Eszterhas will be present.

LEE WOLF

MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Other Woman

In the 1949 domestic satire "A Letter to Three Wives" (playing November 27-29, at Film Forum 2), Joseph L. Mankiewicz perfected his authorial voice—one that's biting but also flattering to the sympathetic intelligence. It's too direct and eclectic to be called simply urbane; in this case, you could call it "suburbane," since Mankiewicz uses it so cunningly to dissect suburbia. Narrated by a village seductress (Celeste Holm) who writes a trio of wives to tell them she's run off with one of their husbands, the movie goes into flashback scenes from three marriages, mixing trenchant commentary and soap opera with hilarity and real poignancy. Jeanne Crain is a former Wave who met her rich husband in the Navy and now, without her uniform, feels out of place in his country-club set—like an ill-rehearsed performer on display. Ann Sothern is a mercenary radio writer clashing with her spouse—a high-school teacher—over values and egos. And Linda Darnell is a woman from the wrong side of the tracks who demands that a crude tycoon court her like a lady. Crain, Sothern, and Darnell are splendid, and the last two receive inspired support from a pair of Douglases: Kirk (as the English teacher) and Paul (as the tycoon).

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Aladdin—An animated film, directed by Ron Clements and John Musker. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema I. . . . ¶ Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex; starting Nov. 25.)

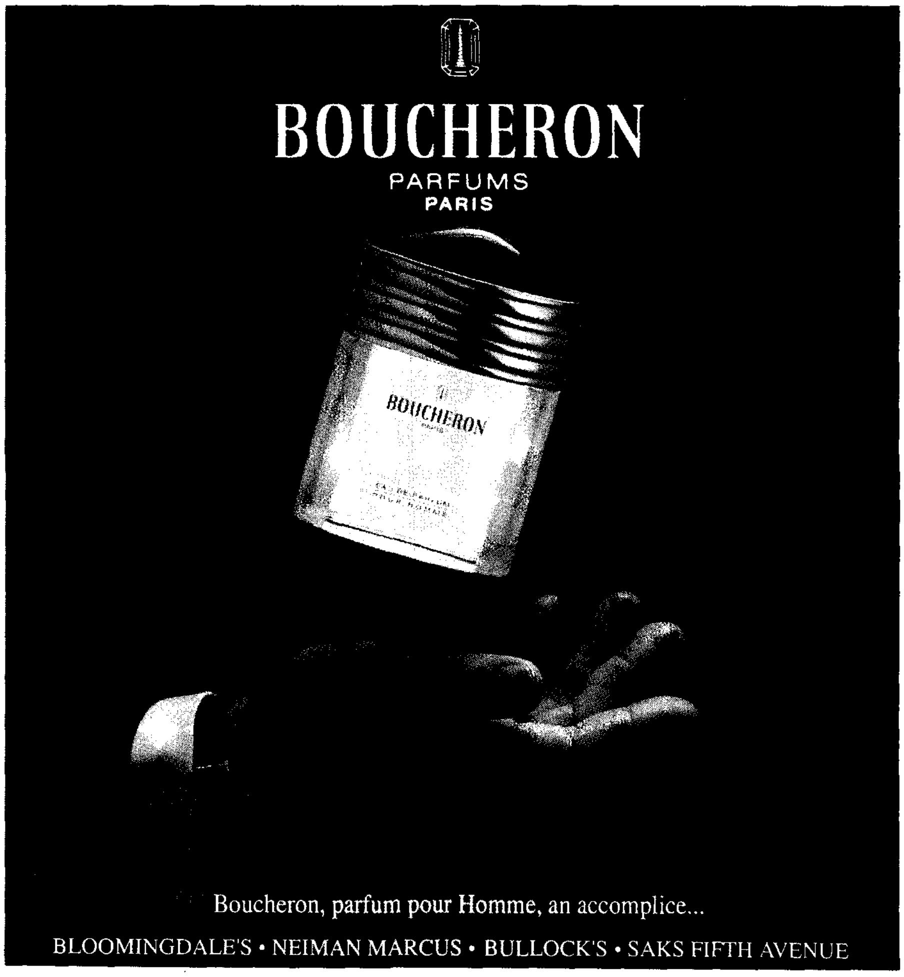
Beauty and the Beast (1946)—Jean Cocteau's first full-length movie (he wrote and directed it) is perhaps the most sensuously elegant of all filmed fairy tales. As a child escapes from everyday family life to the magic of a storybook, so, in the film, Beauty's farm, with its Vermeer simplicity, fades in intensity as we are caught up in the Gustave Doré extravagance of the Beast's enchanted landscape. In Christian Bérard's makeup, Jean Marais is a magnificent Beast; Beauty's self-sacrifice to him holds no more horror than a satisfying romantic fantasy should have. The transformation of the Beast into Prince Charming is ambiguous—what we have gained cannot quite take the place of what we have lost. (When shown the film, Greta Garbo is reported to have said at the end, "Give me back my Beast.") The delicate Josette Day is, quite properly, Beauty. With Marcel André as the father, Michel Auclair as the brother, and Mila Parély as a sister. Alekan was the cinematographer; Georges Auric wrote the score, Bérard did the décor and costumes. In French—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 27-28.)

Bob Roberts—Tim Robbins is the writer, director, and star of this mock documentary that chronicles, C-SPAN style, the senatorial campaign of a young radical-right demagogue. Bob Roberts is a folksinger: instead of giving speeches, he picks up an acoustic guitar and invites his audiences to sing along with his reactionary "protest" anthems. He's Pat Buchanan in Woody Guthrie's clothing, and what's scary about the movie is that this grotesque coupling doesn't even feel like a stretch. Robbins tosses off nasty satiric riffs at a reckless, headlong pace, and the movie, even at its most chilling, is hilarious; its humor is both precise enough to deflate its targets and goofy enough to feel liberating. And his performance as smiling Bob, although it's conceived as a caricature, is never tiresome: it's too finely detailed, and too gleeful. This terrifically entertaining movie represents something very unlikely and very welcome: liberal humor with sharp teeth. Also with Gore Vidal, Alan Rickman, Giancarlo Esposito, Brian Murray, and Ray Wise. The songs are by Tim Robbins and his brother, David.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/7/92.) (Gramercy, Plaza, Quad Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through Nov. 24.)

Bram Stoker's Dracula—With Gary Oldman, Winona Ryder, Anthony Hopkins, and Keanu Reeves; directed by Francis Ford Coppola. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Bay Cinema, Tower East, Orpheum VII, 62nd & Broadway, and Astor Plaza.)

The Crying Game—This amazing new movie by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Miracle") has the sure grip and the unstoppable momentum of a dream. Jordan tells the story of Fergus (Stephen Rea), a troubled I.R.A. gunman who undergoes a thorough emotional metamorphosis, and he makes the hero's change of heart moving and persuasive; the film inspires an irrational sort of trust, a willing suspension of something deeper and more fundamental than disbelief. The script is full of reversals and abrupt dislocations and, halfway through, the movie springs a huge, jaw-dropping surprise. Disorienting us isn't the ultimate aim of Jordan's artistic strategy, though; he jars us out of our accustomed responses to prepare us for the purer, more penetrating ones he really wants from us. The picture is a contemporary romantic thriller whose values are, in the best sense, medieval. Every startling twist in the plot functions as a trial for the hero; and in the end Fergus, having come through the fires of battle and through enchantments that alter the appearance of the familiar world, achieves a knightly grace. But you're not likely to think of the film's mythic overtones while you're watching it. The story is so unusual and so involving, and Jordan's direction is so envelopingly sensuous, that you allow the movie simply to carry you along. It's a splendid entertainment—an elating, charmed sprint through all sorts of contemporary terrors. Also with Forest Whitaker, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Adrian Dunbar, and a newcomer named Jaye Davidson, who is astonishing.—T.R. (11/16/92) (Angelika Film Center, and Columbua Circle; starting Nov. 25.)

Glengarry Glen Ross—David Mamet's 1984 Pulitzer Prize winner—about real-estate salesmen who put the screws on hapless marks in order to keep their own ugly jobs—made ripping theatre, whatever else it was or wasn't. But the movie, set in the lean Bush years, spells out the characters' despair in cue cards, right from the start, and



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hammers away at the plot so relentlessly that you can feel the nails entering the back of your skull. Still, the performers provide relief. Ed Harris and Alan Arkin, as the sleek yet panicky Moss and the sad-sack Aaronow, turn their "Are we speaking or are we talking?" duet into an existential Abbott-and-Costello number. Al Pacino, as Roma, Mamet's Mr. Slick, is amusingly lordly: he's simultaneously high-handed and underhanded. And Kevin Spacey, as their steely office manager, Williamson, plants a daringly long fuse and ignites it with the smallest flicker. Only Jack Lemmon, as Shelley (the Machine) Levene, disappoints: he starts strong, but the director, James Foley, lets him drown in unearned emotion, as if this were Lemmon's shot at "Death of a Salesman." Mamet did his own adaptation, adding another ruthless person to the melodrama: a head-office hit man played by Alec Baldwin.—M.S. (10/5/92) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

High Noon (1952)—The Western form is used for a sneak civics lesson. Gary Cooper is the marshal who fights alone for law and order when his cowtown is paralyzed by fear. Much has been made of the film's structure (it runs from 10:40 A.M. to high noon, coinciding with the running time of the film); of the stark settings and the long shadows; of the screenwriter Carl Foreman's psychological insight and his buildup of suspense. When the film came out, there were actually people who said it was a poem of force comparable to The Iliad. But its insights are primer sociology, and the demonstration of the town's cowardice is Q.E.D. It's a tight piece of work, though—well directed by Fred Zinnemann. With Grace Kelly, Katy Jurado, Lee Van Cleef, Thomas Mitchell, Lloyd Bridges, Henry Morgan, Lon Chaney, Jr., and Otto Kruger. The script is based on the story "The Tin Star," by John W. Cunningham; the cinematography is by Floyd Crosby; and the score is by Dmitri Tiomkin (who took an Academy Award for it). Cooper also won the Best Actor award, and the editors were also honored.—P.K. (Brooklyn Museum; Nov. 28.)

Home Alone 2: Lost in New York—With Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, and Daniel Stern; directed by Chris Columbus. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

The Last of the Mohicans—In Michael Mann's version of James Fenimore Cooper's improbably durable tall tale, everybody looks great: the movie seduces us with haircuts and landscape. The hero of this melodramatic story of pre-Revolutionary America is Hawkeye (Daniel Day-Lewis), a rugged but sensitive individualist who roams the forest of the Hudson Valley in the company of two Indians, Chingachgook (Russell Means) and Uncas (Eric Schweig). The three men serve as guides and bodyguards for Cora and Alice Munro (Madeleine Stowe and Jodhi May), the maidenly daughters of a British officer. The Brits are at war with the French, but the greatest danger to Anglo-Saxon life and limb is posed by a band of bloodthirsty Indian guerrillas, led by a wily Huron named Magua (Wes Studi). The setup pretty much guarantees thrills, and Mann delivers the action-movie goods, but with a sort of abstract, lyrical pictorialism. Day-Lewis's Hawkeye—a cultured white man's dream of virile primitivism—is almost entirely a *visual phenomenon*, and it works. (He runs well, and sports a terrific mane of straight, stringy alternative-rocker hair.) The picture is awfully, solemnly silly, but it's enjoyable and even rather stirring. Also with Maurice Roëves and Steven Waddington.—T.R. (10/5/92) (34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex; through Nov. 24.)

Limelight (1952)—Chaplin's sentimental and high-minded view of theatre and himself. His exhortations about life, courage, consciousness, and "truth" are set in a self-pitying, self-glorifying story. As Calvero the old, impoverished English clown, he appears at a gala benefit and shows the unbelievers who think him finished that he is still the greatest, and then dies in the wings as the applause fades; this is surely the richest hunk of self-gratification since Huck and Tom attended their own funeral—and Chaplin serves it up straight. The mediocrity of Calvero's stage routines may be the result of Chaplin's aiming at greatness. At one point Calvero awaits a young ballerina (acted with considerable charm by Claire Bloom, and danced with authority by Melissa Hayden). In the darkened theatre after she has performed, he says to her, "My dear, you are a true artist, a true artist," and the emphasis is on *his* eyes, *his* depth of feeling. And is it because Chaplin didn't talk onscreen until late in his career that he doesn't seem to have a dramatic instinct for language? (He talks high-mindedly and incessantly.) With Sydney Chaplin, Nigel Bruce, Norman Lloyd, André Eglevsky, and, all too briefly, Buster Keaton.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; Nov. 29 and Dec. 1.)

The Lover—Jean-Jacques Annaud's version of Marguerite Duras's autobiographical novel, about her sexual coming of age in 1929 Saigon, is a singularly empty moviegoing experience. Annaud simply illustrates the love story of the Young Girl (Jane March) and the Chinese Man (Tony Leung), and uses Duras's narration (spoken by Jeanne Moreau) whenever he's absolutely pressed to articulate what's happening. The director's point of attack isn't acute enough to clarify the tensions in the Girl's family and the chaos of colonial Indochina; as the Man proclaims his love and the Girl tries out her budding wiles on him, the film becomes a game of "She loves me, she loves me not." Although the stars expose their bodies with aplomb, Annaud stages their grappling so self-consciously, with so few undercurrents to carry you along, that you tire of their flesh. Screenplay by Annaud and Gerard Brach.—M.S. (11/16/92) (Fine Arts.)

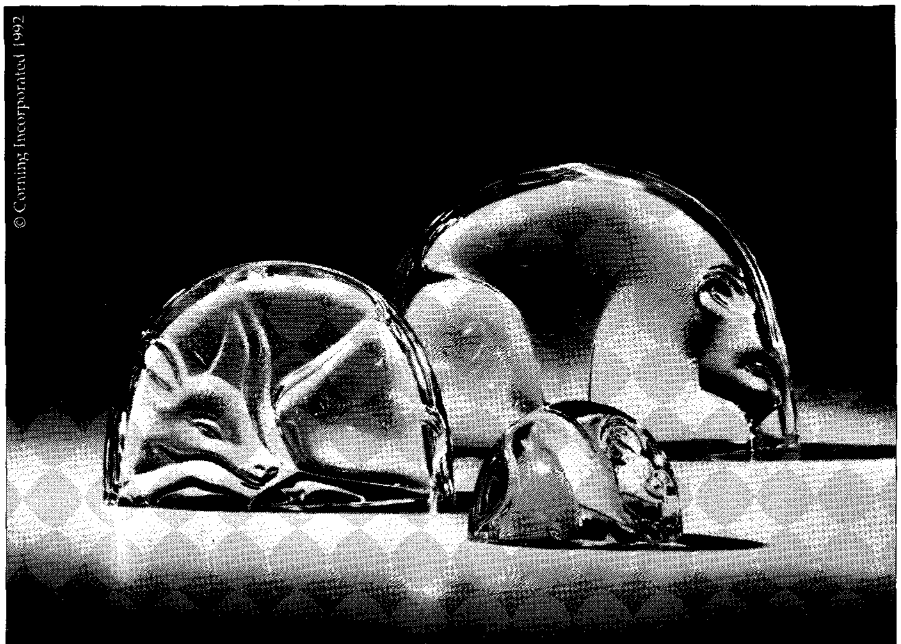
Malcolm X—With Denzel Washington, directed by Spike Lee. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Modern Times (1936)—After "City Lights," which was silent, with a musical accompaniment and sound effects, Charlie Chaplin was absent from the screen for five years; he returned in triumph with this rambunctious comedy in which he still doesn't speak, although he uses background sounds and, as a singing waiter in a crowded cabaret, does a wonderful jabberwocky patter song that you can't get out of your head. (It is, of course, a demonstration of how unnecessary words are.) Influenced by René Clair's "À Nous la Liberté," Chaplin opens the film with a satire on the dehumanizing effects of technology (the machines speak—they whir and pound and screech), but Chaplin is far more basic and sadistic than Clair. As a worker on an assembly line, Charlie the tramp is run through the gears of a huge machine and is force-fed by an experimental, time-saving contraption that splashes soup in his face and shoves corn on the cob into his mouth. He can't take a second off work to scratch himself without turning the whole plant into chaos; after a long stretch of tightening screws, he becomes a robot who runs to tighten the buttons he sees on women. The picture is about the social disorders of the thirties, and there are clashes between the unemployed and the police, and a gag about a Communist demonstration, yet it's one of the happiest and most lighthearted of the Chaplin pictures—partly because his new leading lady, Paulette Goddard, playing a character listed as "a Gamin," has a beautiful grin and a bouncy, outgoing personality. And with the use of more sound, Chaplin seems to drop some of his pathos; this picture doesn't pull at your heartstrings—it has the spirit of a good vaudeville show, and the tramp doesn't lose out at the end (he gets his gamin). Produced, written, and directed by Chaplin, who also takes credit for the music. With Henry Bergman as the café proprietor, Chester Conklin as the mechanic, and Hank Mann as one of the burglars.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; Nov. 29-30.)

My New Gun—The heroine of Stacy Cochran's movie is a young New Jersey housewife named Debbie Bender (Diane Lane), whose husband buys her a revolver she doesn't want. This husband, Gerald (Stephen Collins), is a smug radiologist who dominates his wife completely: when he announces that the Bender household—a condo overlooking a golf course—needs a firearm, that's it. The gun itself is a little more than a pretext and a lot less than a symbol: it serves mostly to get her involved in the mysterious life of her across-the-street neighbor, Skippy (James LeGros), a scruffy, shifty-eyed young man who has a big crush on her. LeGros is wonderfully sly and seductive, and Diane Lane's delicately funny performance conveys the movie's exploratory sensibility with thrilling clarity: she makes us feel the risky joy of venturing beyond your own narrow plot and becoming a part of someone else's story. Cochran—a recent film-school graduate—gives the dull suburban setting a surprising richness and beauty. Her condoland isn't a satirist's world, or a cartoonist's, or a fairy-tale teller's; it's more like a novelist's. Yet the sort of liberation that this picture proposes, and embodies, is the product of a true filmmaker's vision. Also with Tess Harper, Maddie Corman, Bruce Altman, and Bill Raymond. Ed Lachman's cinematography is terrific.—T.R. (11/2/92) (Angelika Film Center.)

Night and the City—A remake, directed by Irwin Winkler and written by Richard Price, of Jules Dassin's terrific 1950 film noir. The filmmakers and their star, Robert De Niro, try to tap the Scorsese vein of kinetic urban violence, out-of-control male energy, and brooding, pessimistic wit. Everyone involved in the picture has a formidable résumé, but what they've put on the screen is wan, washed-out, blurry—a photocopy of a fax of a carbon of something that was once clear and bold. As in the original film, the story is about a small-time hustler who foolishly invades the turf of a powerful sports promoter and is decisively slapped down for his efforts. Price and Winkler make only the most glancing attempt to re-create the tone of Dassin's movie; they turn the story into a comedy about a lovable loser, a New York motormouth who is supposed to charm us with his indefatigable optimism. Winkler moves the camera constantly, fills the soundtrack with old rock and roll and R. & B., and tries hard to create a gritty atmosphere of low-life New York desperation, but everything he does looks mechanical, as if it had been learned by rote. Price's deft verbal riffing is just decorative. And De Niro's performance, in a role that Richard Widmark played brilliantly in the 1950 version, produces a perfect vacuum at the center of the picture. Also with Jessica Lange, Cliff Gorman, Alan King, Jack Warden, and Eli Wallach.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Coronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Olympia.)

Of Mice and Men—The director and co-star, Gary Sinise, has been quoted as saying, "I saw the 1939 film version and it was such a product of its time that it meant nothing to me. I thought Lon Chaney, Jr., was real hammy." Actually, Lewis Milestone's version of John Steinbeck's tragic fable, with Burgess Meredith as the shrewd ranch hand George and Chaney as the simple giant Lennie, is a wonderfully wrought classic. This new movie, adapted by Horton Foote—with Sinise as George and John Malkovich as Lennie—is the one that goes high on the hog. Led by Sinise, who edges his profile into every shot as if he were a model in a



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FRATELLI
ROSSETTI

rustic-clothing catalogue, and Malkovich, who carries on like a further infantilized Tommy Smothers (his upper register recalls Tweety Pie), the cast acts with self-conscious, surface physicality. Ray Walston fits right in with the histrionics on this film's Steppenwolf Ranch; even Joe Morton catches the overacting bug. At least Casey Siemaszko is down-to-earth as the bully, Curley, but for all the talk of humanizing his flirty wife, Sinise hangs Sherilyn Fenn out to dry. The only restrained performance is given by Lennie's pup.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Waverly, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Producers (1968)—Zero Mostel as a producer who sells 25,000 per cent of a play, intending to produce a flop so that he won't have to pay the backers anything. Naturally, he produces a hit. Some of the material is funny in an original way, but Mel Brooks, who wrote and directed (both for the first time), doesn't get the timing right and good gags fall apart or become gross or just don't develop. The sequence consisting of tryouts for the role of Hitler in the play, which is called "Springtime for Hitler," is potentially so great that what he does with it lets you down. Still, terrible as the picture is, a lot of it is very enjoyable. For satire of the theatre as inspired as Brooks' gags at their best, it's not hard to put up with the ineptitude and the amateurish camera angles. It's even possible to put up with Zero Mostel in closeup. (He was not one to tone his effects down for the camera.) With Dick Shawn, Estelle Winwood, Renée Taylor, Kenneth Mars, and Gene Wilder, whose whining, strangled-voice bit is almost a shtick of genius.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 1.)

Reservoir Dogs—Most of the action in Quentin Tarantino's pulp crime movie takes place in a cavernous warehouse, to which the surviving participants of a botched jewelry heist have repaired to lick their wounds. The crooks amuse themselves by accusing each other of treachery (*someone* tipped off the police), waving their guns, screaming obscenities, and torturing a cop whom one of them has captured. This is, explicitly, a man's world. Tarantino emphasizes the characters' absurdity; they're all presented as demented children, little boys with big guns. He wants us to feel as if we had crash-landed in an alternate universe: the Planet of the Goons. The movie runs on film-school cleverness—a homemade pharmaceutical cocktail of pop music, visual jolts, and allusions to Scorsese and Peckinpah. As super-cool young directors go, Tarantino (whose first film this is) is fairly engaging: his nihilism is antic and oddly cheery. But the picture is less than the sum of its outrageous gags and inventive bits of business. This is a reasonably lively picture about nothing, and that's apparently just what it was meant to be. With Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Steve Buscemi, Michael Madsen, Lawrence Tierney, and Chris Penn.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

Charlie Chaplin

A River Runs Through It—Robert Redford's movie of Norman Maclean's lyrical novella about fly-fishing and family loyalty in Montana is serene, lulling, tranquil—no, it's dead dull. Maclean's story traces the history of its narrator's relationship with his self-destructive kid brother, Paul, through detailed descriptions of their fishing trips; the narrative is driven by the tension between what it's telling us and what it's leaving out. Disastrously, Redford and screenwriter Richard Friedenberg open up the story. They show us too much of what's happening offstage—that is, away from the river—and thus allow the real source of the story's emotions to dissipate. With a delicately balanced narrative like this one, more is inevitably less. The movie is ravishingly shot (by Philippe Rousselot), but it's lifeless, because it lacks the vital spirit of Maclean's writing: the precision and grace that he seems to have learned, in part, from fly-fishing. Redford and Friedenberg try to catch the story's elusive meanings by lobbing grenades into the river and blowing everything in it out into the light of day. With Craig Sheffer as the narrator, Norman, and Brad Pitt (who looks like a young Redford and gives a lightweight performance) as Paul. The supporting cast includes Emily Lloyd, Tom Skerritt, Stephen Shellen, Nicole Burdette, Brenda Blethyn, and Susan Traylor.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, and New York Twin. . . . ¶ Columbus Circle; through Nov. 24. . . . ¶ 84th Street Sixplex; starting Nov. 25.)

Singles—Cameron Crowe's second film as a writer-director (the first was the lovely 1989 teen comedy "Say Anything") is a buoyant, sweet-tempered little picture about the romantic confusions of some young Seattle apartment-dwellers. It's an ensemble piece, the sort of movie that flits from character to character like a hummingbird. Crowe's touch is so light that you may, in the end, feel a bit unsatisfied—disappointed that the movie's buzzing comic vitality starts to lose its resonance the moment you leave the theatre. This is romantic comedy of the wispiest kind, but the picture is generous, graceful, and consistently funny. Campbell Scott and Kyra Sedgwick play Steve and Linda, idealistic yuppies in love, and both prove to be wonderfully deft comedians. And Matt Dillon, as Cliff, the rather dim leader of a band called Citizen Dick, is hilarious. But the standout in Crowe's energetic cast is Bridget Fonda, who plays Janet, a bubbly underachiever inexplicably smitten with Cliff. Fonda is a true original: she brings such reckless, joyous abandon to Janet's pursuit of the unlikely object of desire that she transforms this desperate-love story line into something exuberantly optimistic. This movie shows that Cameron Crowe is a rare bird, too: a sunny realist.—T.R. (First & 62nd Cinemas, and Art Greenwich Twin.)

Waterland—Tom Crick (Jeremy Irons), the protagonist and narrator of Stephen Gyllenhaal's film, is a middle-aged history teacher immobilized by his own past—by the dire events of his wartime adolescence in the fen country of East Anglia. The 1983 novel, by Graham Swift, from which the picture has been adapted is a determinedly inward-looking work: unpromising material for a film. And this hero—a hopeless, defeated, rumpled-corduroy man, marking time as he slides inexorably toward decrepitude and merciful oblivion—isn't the sort that movie audiences tend to clasp to their bosoms. Yet the picture is, in its gray way, absorbing and often moving. The screenwriter, Peter Prince, has streamlined the novel's twisty narrative very intelligently. (He retains the book's juiciest, most lurid episodes.) Gyllenhaal's direction is occasionally too studied, but it has some drive. And the actors are awfully good. Grant Warnock and Lena Headey, the young performers who play Tom and his wife-to-be in flashback sequences, bring a convincing and touching adolescent gravity to their roles. Irons imparts a whiff of something like madness to his character's middle-aged desperation, and thus saves it from seeming just another incarnation of the dull, low-horizon resignation familiar to audiences of English films and fiction about educated losers. His performance lifts the movie to the top of the rueful-retrospective class. Also with Sinead Cusack, David Morrissey, Ethan Hawke, and John Heard.—T.R. (11/2/92) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

RICHARD MERKIN

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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE VIETNAM UNDEAD

EARLIER this month, the President of the United States, among others, made a pilgrimage to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to read out some of the names of the dead. It was an eerie, even Attic ritual, in which the drone of the names sounded like a Homeric catalogue, an unadorned elegy of war and memory. Adding to the quality of strangeness was the knowledge that at least fourteen of the names etched in the black granite memorial were names of living men.

It's as if nothing attached to the Vietnam War—not even that great carved symbol set into the earth ten years ago with the noblest of intentions—could ever be free of folly. According to officials at the National Archives, there are 58,183 names inscribed on the wall; the Department of Defense's records show 58,159 American deaths in Vietnam. Margaret Adams, the Assistant Chief of the Archival Services Branch of the Center for Electronic Records at the National Archives, said that her office has so far located fourteen "definite mistakes" and there may be more. "It may have been a simple matter of clerical error," she said. Eugene Toni, who lost part of both legs when he stepped on a land mine while serving as a sergeant in the 101st Airborne near Hue, discovered his name on the wall when he visited it as part of an attempt to break free of the stress that had haunted him since the war. The discovery did little to ease his stress. Later, he learned that a clerk working on the United States Army's data base had typed "51" instead of "21" next to his name. The code "51" meant "killed."

Robert Lee Bedker, a roofer from Seattle, does not remember much about the day—September 4, 1966—when he was riding in an armored personnel carrier in Vietnam and his skull was crushed in an accident. He spent nine months in a hospital near Tacoma recovering from his wounds. "A few years ago, I flew to D.C., and saw my name up there on the wall," Bedker said. "It's a good thing that someone had tipped me off ahead of time, because I'm not sure how I would have reacted to that kind of shock. Even so, it was a very strange experience. A few of my friends from Vietnam who'd been killed were up there on the wall. I saw their names and then I saw my own, and—well, a shiver went through me. It kinda gives you a second look at things." Bedker said he has never been told how his name came to end up on the wall.

The memorial, which was built by the private Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, hired government workers to verify the lists of the dead. The main source of information was the Department of Defense. Since the mistakes were discovered, most of the names of living veterans have been taken out of the paperback guides to the wall, but, according to Lee Gladwin, a specialist at the National Archives, there is no way to erase the names from the granite. To do that, entire panels of the polished stone would have to be removed at tremendous expense, and so the names remain—the last mistakes, perhaps, of a mistaken war.

GORGEOUS GEORGE

BILL CLINTON may not be in the White House yet, but archivists (busy people) are already starting to assemble a documentary record of his Presidency. As a result, the records of the election campaign are currently inaccessible to the public—sealed off in his former campaign headquarters, the old *Arkansas Gazette* building in Little Rock. This is a pity, for there is one filing cabinet there that it might be fun to riffle through—one marked "George Stephanopoulos, Correspondence." It turns out that Stephanopoulos, Governor Clinton's handsome communica-

JERZY KOLOCZ

tions director, has quietly become an international heartthrob, and at the height of the campaign adoring letters were arriving in his office at the rate of about thirty a week.

"They're all different," his assistant, Heather Beckel, says. "They're not all blatant. And they're not all from young women. He seems to appeal to older women, too—not, like, romantically but in a grandmotherly fashion. It doesn't stop at the American border. He's very popular with Japanese women and Greek women. He's practically a cult figure in Japan." Women have sent him photographs of themselves or of their daughters. He has been given books, baklava, and a lot of ties. Ties? "The only thing I can figure is that he wears interesting ties on television," Ms. Beckel says.

Members of Stephanopoulos's staff also have to handle telephone calls from his more persistent admirers. "I remember one call, from a guy with a TV show, I won't say which one," Ms. Beckel says. "He was a booker—I talk to a lot of bookers. He said his sister had asked him to find out if George was single or married. I said George was single but had a steady girlfriend. He said, 'Well, my sister is just convinced that George is the perfect man for her.' "

The girlfriend is named Joan, she lives in Philadelphia, she is not involved in politics, the relationship is serious, and that's all that Stephanopoulos will say on the subject. He does, however, make it a rule that all letters, whatever their nature, are promptly replied to and are signed by him personally, so the flood of mail creates a lot of work for staff members. They have tried to come up with an all-purpose formula for answering the letters which overlooks the romantic character of some. "We don't address that specifically," Ms. Beckel says. "We say things like 'Thank you for your kind words' and 'Thank you for your generous compliments.' "

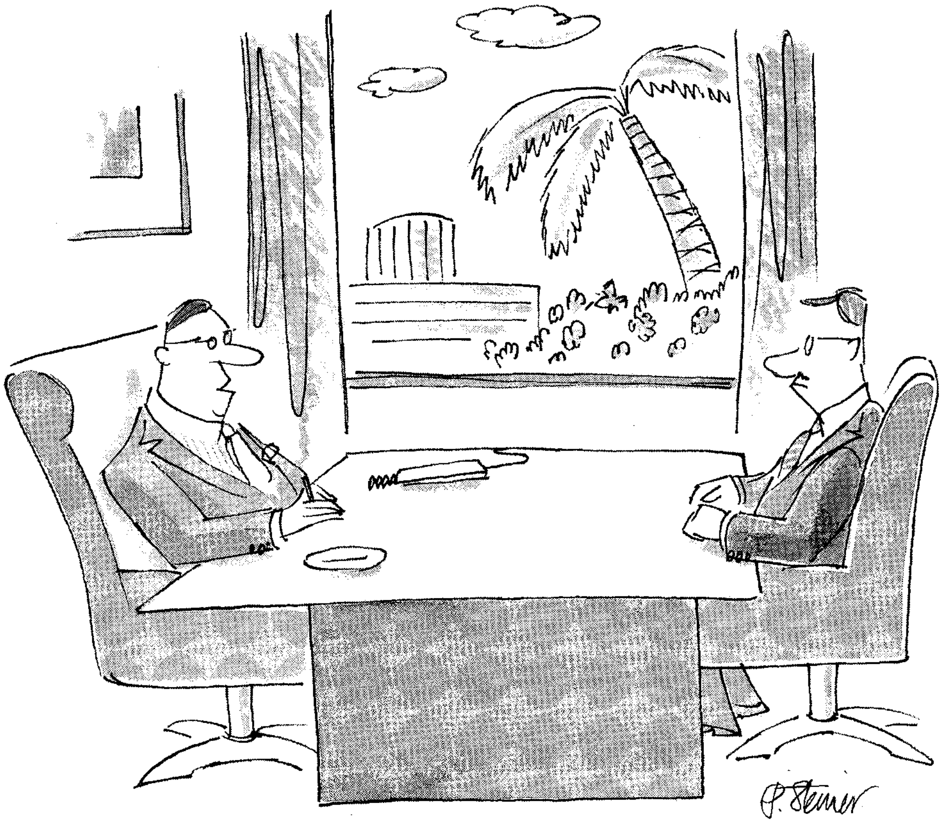
QUEEN'S GAMBIT

Walter Goodman, in a television review for the *Times* last week, described the BBC television documentary "Elizabeth R: A Year in the Life of the Queen" as perhaps "the most boring two-hour BBC import ever to make its way to American public television." He is entitled to his opinion, but it is a surprising one, because the program was interesting on a number of counts. For one thing, it was by far the best opportunity ordinary people have ever been granted to study the personality of the woman who has reigned over Britain, Australia, Canada, and various other places for more than forty years; and a very odd little person she turned out to be—in most ways conventional, but at the same time quirky, whimsical, and strangely detached. The program was also interesting as a piece of carefully calculated propaganda. The only previous time the BBC had been allowed to invade the privacy of the royal family was in the late nineteen-sixties, when it broadcast its first propaganda film designed to make the monarchy appear more human and appealing to the British people. (This one was the second.) The sixties film focussed attention on the family as a whole, showing it in informal situations and emphasizing its attachment to family values. By contrast, the new film, even though it was made before the latest scandals involving Fergie and the Princess of Wales blew up, recognized that the royal family had become in the meantime a source of national embarrassment rather than national pride, and therefore focussed almost exclusively on the Queen herself. Even her husband, Prince Philip, hardly made an appearance.

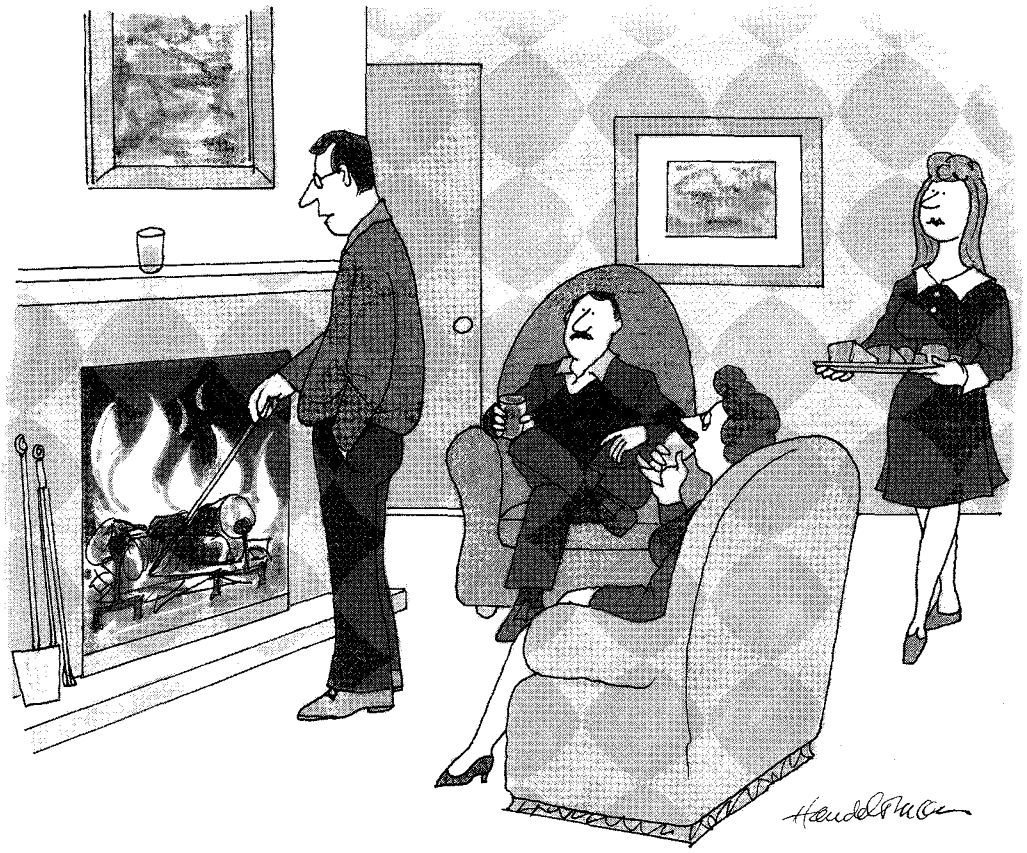
Although everybody is aware in theory that the British monarchy is surrounded by panoply and ritual, it took this film's loving attention to ceremonial detail to bring home the extraordinary datedness of it all. Still, in the British monarchy's present crisis it was probably wise to emphasize the old rather than the new—if by the new we mean the Queen's unruly children and children-in-law.

ART AND COMMERCE

"We know what they're going to say at the end, whatever happens," one reporter said to another. "They're going to say it shows the underlying strength of the market." The occasion was Sotheby's main fall sale of contemporary art, which was held last Tuesday in its principal auction room, on the Upper East Side. The



"Dump Leno and get Perot."



"*Still, the Trojan War might well have gone the other way if the Greeks had excluded gays from their armed forces.*"

art world has famously been going through a soggy patch in the last couple of years, but death and divorce, traditionally the auctioneer's best friends, have lately been joined by financial need as reasons for people to sell, and Sotheby's had put together a handsome show, with pieces from such collectors as the British advertising man Charles Saatchi and Sotheby's own proprietor, A. Alfred Taubman. Would this be the comeback sale?

The first lot was a painting of Brigitte Bardot's mouth by the German artist Gerhard Richter. John Marion, who is Sotheby's chief auctioneer and the chairman of its North American operation, often barks as though he were selling off Thoroughbreds in Kentucky, but on this occasion he was somewhat subdued. So was the bidding. The Richter went for eighty-eight thousand dollars, which was twelve thousand dollars below the low estimate, but at least it was sold. Sales establish a rhythm, and it quickly became clear that this sale was far from a triumph. At Christie's a few days earlier, a Matisse had set a record, and there could be no doubt that the Matisse exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art had played a part in that. But the Whitney's show of Jean-Michel Basquiat performed no such trick: the only Basquiat in Sotheby's sale didn't find a buyer. There was a low moan, as of pleasure and pain commingled, when "Press," a fine Rauschenberg from 1964, which had been estimated to go for between a million and three-quarters and two million dollars, rose only as high as a million one hundred thousand, but it was knocked down anyway.

The Rauschenberg was sold by Mr. Saatchi, and so was the crown jewel of the sale—a large painting of a hundred Marilyn Monroes by Andy Warhol. Sotheby's officials had privately expressed a hope that it would exceed the record for a Warhol—four million seventy thousand dollars. It didn't, but it fetched a still respectable three million seven hundred and forty thousand. There was scattered applause, and a reporter said, "Hear that? In the old days they wouldn't applaud until something reached *ten* million."

The most intense contest of the evening was over a Bruce Nauman—a large neon sculpture from the early eighties programmed to flash urgent, fierce instructions such as "Eat and Live, Eat and Die." The contenders were a still unidentified telephone bidder and Laura Carpenter, a former Manhattan gallery owner now operating out of Santa Fe. Finally, it went to the telephone bidder, for a million nine hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, and that was a record for the artist. Seven lots later, the auction was over. Fifty-one of seventy-seven works of art had sold for a total of twenty-one million four hundred thousand dollars—far below Sotheby's presale estimate of between thirty-one and a half and forty million, but the over-all mood had seemed less negative than choosy. For instance, of three paintings by the eighties bad boy Julian Schnabel two were left unsold, but the third—a splashy abstract on black velvet—fetched a hundred and eighty-seven thousand dollars, which was well above the high estimate of a hundred and twenty-five thousand. At a press conference afterward, Sotheby's head of contemporary art, Lucy Mitchell-Innes, undertook an analysis of the figures. "There was good bidding on a number of paintings," she began. What she seemed to be saying was that the sale had shown the underlying strength of the market.

WATERCOLOR

Ivory Dishwashing Liquid, the pure-white one, which has been around since 1957, has been eliminated from the universe. The old white Ivory Liquid: tracks of it, just squeezed from the white plastic bottle, looked attractive—pearly, even—on a soiled dinner plate, and after a blast of hot water there were jubilant bubbles, lots of them. The new Ivory Liquid isn't white: both the liquid and the bottle are clear. Some people don't accept radical change without a fight, however—or, at least, a telephone call to an authority. (After all, Ivory's parent corporation, Procter & Gamble, perhaps mindful of the lesson of Classic Coke, didn't dare wipe out its hundred-and-thirteen-year-old floating soap when it decided to design a soap that would sink.) The authority in this case is Lynn Hailey, a spokesperson for Ivory Liquid at Procter & Gamble, in Cincinnati. One could almost say spokespersons: her personae varied wildly from answer to answer.

Had people been calling up Procter & Gamble to say they were upset about the change?

"Uh-uh," Ms. Hailey said blankly.

Had anyone in the past ever complained of being bored with Ivory White?

"Oh, I don't know." With a sigh.

Would it ever be white again?

"Oh, I don't know." With a shorter sigh. "You can't predict the future."

Were all the white bottles gone forever?

She became animated: "It's a *replacement.* It's very successful. We test-marketed it for a year. We began testing it in Utah—out West, essentially—and parts of Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon, in July, '91." Now she spoke defensively: "What *is* it? You don't like this new one? . . . Did you try it? . . . An Ivory purist, huh? . . . Did you vote for Bush? . . . Do you not like change?"

When Ms. Hailey was told that it was as if an old friend had died, she said, as if it were three in the morning and she were manning a suicide-prevention hotline, "Don't look at it that way."

When it was suggested to Ms. Hailey that there isn't much that gives stability in life, she said "Oh, and this does?" and succumbed to semi-hysterical laughter.

Then she began to talk as if she were "Hints from Heloise": "Do you do a lot of dishes? . . . How do your hands look? . . . Send me a photo of your hands. Let me ask you this: Do you—I don't want to say 'Do you eat greasy food?' but what kind of food do you usually . . . sort of vegetables? Not a lot of meat? . . . Well, certainly meat is greasier than a lot of other foods. Try Ivory Clear on spaghetti sauce. Try it on a greasy *pan.*"

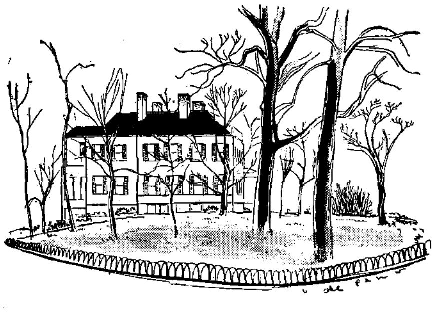
As far as the public was concerned, a random sampling seemed to show that men didn't feel compelled to discuss dishwashing liquids. James Ivory, of Merchant Ivory Productions, had no comment. An incredibly famous piano player avoided the subject. "Remember 'Wonder bread helps build strong bodies eight ways'?" he asked. "One nightmare Saturday morning on television, they announced, 'Wonder bread helps build strong bodies *twelve* ways.' And there was a subtle change in Tootsie Rolls. It seemed as if they were sweeter and had more air in them."

Women were more vehement about the clear stuff. A member of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Atlanta said, "Mother wouldn't have had it in the house, but my daughter's right down in the kitchen using it. The maid quit. It looks weak, like water. It's nothing. It's cheap. It's disgusting, the way everything else in the world is becoming. I was always happy when I saw the white bottle. It just made you feel safe. The bottle's junky now. It looks like a big old glass building that will fall down soon."

REMEMBERING BAINBRIDGE

"WELL, I have to admit you have wit," Harold Ross once said to John Bainbridge. On an even more expansive occasion, Ross expressed the belief that Bainbridge had "an internal Geiger counter for phonies." The other rare gifts that Bainbridge embodied included humor without malice, style without pretension, abundant curiosity, and profound patience as a listener.

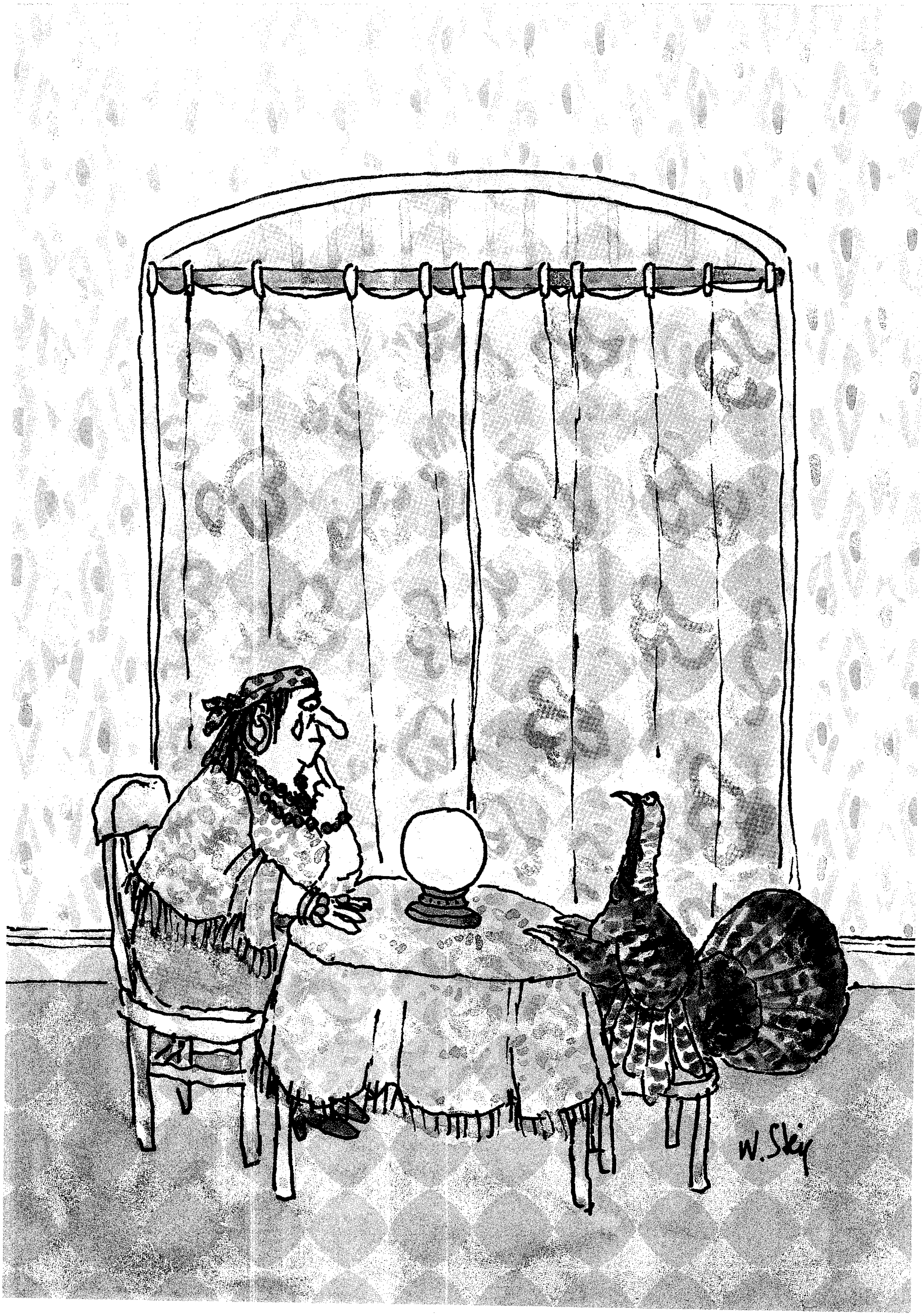
In 1939, three years after graduating from Northwestern University, Bainbridge joined the staff of *The New Yorker.* One day that summer, Ross thought he had glimpsed a fig tree from a moving train and sent Bainbridge to the Bronx to investigate. Bainbridge returned with several fig trees, a bushel of information, and his first Talk of the Town story. In the ensuing decades, he graced these pages with hundreds of Talk stories and with dozens of often exquisitely funny reporting pieces. Along the way, he revealed an inexhaustible passion for factual accuracy and a perfect ear for dialogue. Quoting Toots Shor: "Madden called me up and said, 'You better get out of town for a few days. Do you want to go down and see George?' George was in Havana. I said I wanted to go to Atlantic City, and Madden said he would send me some money. He sent me a G. I look at this. I say, 'This is important money.' I went to Atlantic City and blew the G." His editor, Gardner Botsford, has said that Bainbridge "could get the Sphinx to talk."



Bainbridge's most astonishing reportorial feat, many people believe, was his reduction of the entire state of Texas to one elegant, perceptive volume—"The Super-Americans," which was published in 1961 and became a best-seller. Texas, Bainbridge wrote, is "the frontier of America—the land of the second chance, the last outpost of individuality, the stage upon which the American Drama, in all its wild extremes, is being performed with eloquence and panache, as if for the first time."

In 1968, Bainbridge and his wife, Dorothy, decided to view the American drama from a distance and transplanted themselves to England. In his absence, younger members of *The New Yorker* staff acquainted themselves with his intelligence and generosity of spirit by reading and rereading his early books—"Little Wonder, or, *The Reader's Digest* and How It Grew" and "The Wonderful World of Toots Shor." The move to England turned out to be temporary. This past summer, the Bainbridges repatriated, settling into a big old Georgian brick house in Schoharie, New York, not far from Albany. "Never another move which requires taking anything more than a toothbrush," he wrote to a friend. On November 12th, he died of heart failure.

For the last two years, Bainbridge was troubled by a back injury, but the only way to describe him is upright and cheerful. In his life and his work, he showed that reconciling the irreconcilable—gentleness and fierce reporting, seriousness and laughter, hard news and feather-light writing—was no more than an act of grace, within reach of us all: a snap. ◆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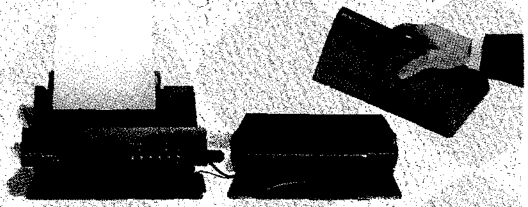

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POSTSCRIPT

SHOTS IN THE DARK

by Edward Jay Epstein

WHEN Jim Garrison, the former district attorney of New Orleans, died, of heart disease, on October 21st, the obituaries called attention to two extraordinary events that occurred a generation apart—one in fact, one in fiction—and will be forever connected with Garrison, and with each other, in the popular imagination. The real event, which took place in 1969, was Garrison's prosecution of Clay Shaw in New Orleans for conspiring to commit murder in the November 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy, which gave Garrison the distinction of being the only prosecutor ever to have tried someone for the Kennedy assassination. The fictional event was Oliver Stone's film "JFK," released in 1991, in which Garrison, played by Kevin Costner, achieved celluloid immortality as a soft-spoken, truth-seeking district attorney who relentlessly investigates the Kennedy assassination and, despite all the obstacles thrown in his way by the federal establishment, heroically exposes the conspiracy responsible for killing the President. Although—or because—this fictive rendition excited enormous interest among the millions who saw it, and even led to the film's distributor's issuing study guides for a generation of young moviegoers unborn at the time of the assassination, the real Garrison, and his treatment of the truth, deserves not to be forgotten.

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Jim Garrison: A career spent turning fact into fiction.

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In April of 1967, I went to New Orleans to write about District Attorney Garrison for this magazine, and inadvertently became part of his investigation. A month earlier, he had shocked the world by arresting Clay L. Shaw, a socially prominent civic leader and the retired director of the city's International Trade Mart, and charging him with conspiring to murder President Kennedy. Garrison had explained to a bewildered press conference a week before the arrest, "My staff and I solved the assassination weeks ago. I wouldn't say this if we didn't have the evidence beyond a shadow of a doubt."

Garrison's conspiracy thesis clearly contradicted the Warren Commission's conclusion that a lone gunman, Lee Harvey Oswald, had been responsible for the assassination. But, as far as I was concerned, that did not necessarily mean that Garrison was wrong. Two years earlier, in writing my master's thesis at Cornell, which became the 1966 book "Inquest: The Warren Commission and

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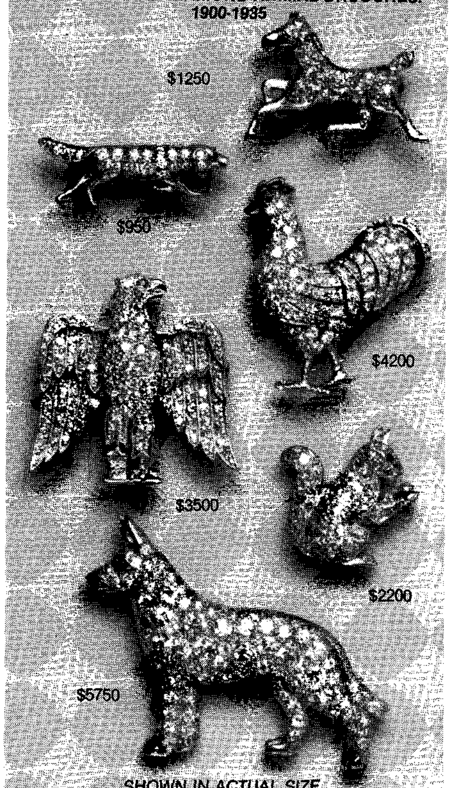

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the Establishment of Truth," I had examined the Warren Commission's staff records and found that its investigation, far from being the exhaustive examination it was taken for, had skimmed over unresolved issues. The commission, which had been appointed by President Lyndon Johnson on November 29, 1963, was determined to have its report out before the 1964 election. So in June of 1964, just three months after staff lawyers began their investigation at the assassination site, the commission instructed them that they were supposed to be "closing doors, not opening them." At that time, one yawning gap in the investigation was Oswald's activities in New Orleans in the summer of 1963. So I, for one, believed it to be at least possible that a local district attorney not hemmed in by the time pressures, the political considerations, and the national-security considerations that affected the Warren Commission might have uncovered hidden associates of Oswald's in New Orleans.

Garrison was born Earling Carothers Garrison in Denniston, Iowa, on November 20, 1921, but he legally changed his first name to plain Jim upon entering Louisiana politics, in the nineteen-fifties. He had previously tried his hand at being a pilot in the military in the Second World War, an agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Seattle, and a lawyer in New Orleans. After running for a judgeship and failing to win, he ran as a reform candidate for district attorney in a five-man race in 1961, and was elected in a runoff. He quickly made a reputation for himself, strapping on a pistol and leading well-publicized raids on brothels, after-hours bars, and dice games in the French Quarter. "I am flamboyant," he bragged to the press. When the panel of eight judges who oversaw his office's expenditures refused to authorize any more funds for these forays, he suggested that they were under "racketeer influences," and, because of this unsupported charge, in February of 1963 he was tried for criminal defamation and convicted. Garrison appealed to the United States Supreme Court—on the ground that the state law on defamation of officials was unconstitutional—and won, thereby greatly expanding the public's latitude in levelling charges against public officials.

Garrison was popularly referred to in New Orleans as the Jolly Green Giant, and when I met him for dinner, at Broussard's, I could see why. He stood six feet six inches tall, and had a self-conscious stoop that made him look even taller, as if he were larger than life. As he lumbered through the restaurant, he paused to shake hands with acquaintances at nearly every table. His welcome to me was extremely gracious. He began by saying solemnly that my book on the Warren Commission had helped shape his decision to launch his investigation. (I learned later that that was more or less the standard compliment he paid critics of the Warren Commission.) Fixing me with an intense, almost walleyed stare, and speaking slowly but with very careful articulation, he said that he traced his own intellectual development to two heroes: Ayn Rand, whose lone-wolf protagonist in "The Fountainhead" had exemplified to him the need for individuals of higher consciousness to act like supermen, and Huey Long, the assassinated governor of Louisiana, whose speeches attacking élite conspiracies had attracted immense popular support in the nineteen-thirties.

As dinner progressed, Garrison spelled out the conspiracy he had uncovered. His narrative was rich but episodic. Its central character was David W. Ferrie, a former airline pilot and self-styled soldier of fortune, who was bizarre even by the broad standards of the French Quarter. He had pieces of orange fur glued to his head, having lost all his body hair from the disease alopecia. He professed to be a bishop in a quasi-political cult called the Orthodox Old Catholic Church of North America, and he had worked as a free-lance pilot, a pornography trafficker, a hypnotist, and a gas-station operator. By the summer of 1963, when Oswald was living in New Orleans, Ferrie had also become involved in training anti-Castro guerrillas.

The day after the Kennedy assassination, Garrison told me, he got a tip to the effect that Ferrie had trained Oswald in marksmanship. Garrison detained Ferrie for questioning, but released him a few hours later, after the tipster, a private investigator named Jack Martin, who was known to have provided false leads in other cases, recanted his story. Three years later, after Senator Russell Long, of

Louisiana, told Garrison that he had doubts about the Warren Commission's version of the assassination, Garrison resumed his pursuit of Ferrie. Ferrie maintained that he had had no connection with Oswald, but Garrison found witnesses who established—to his satisfaction, at least—that Ferrie had been involved with Oswald through his anti-Castro activities. He was deeply suspicious of a trip that Ferrie had made to Houston the day of the assassination, and hypothesized that Ferrie had been Oswald's getaway pilot. (Ferrie said that he had been in Texas to go goose hunting.) By the time I saw Garrison, in April of 1967, he was asserting with absolute authority that Ferrie, "one of history's most important individuals," was intimately involved in the mechanics of the Kennedy assassination.

The trouble with this theory, in terms of its usefulness in a criminal prosecution, was that Ferrie had died some six weeks before Garrison outlined it to me. Garrison told me at dinner that just when he had been planning to rearrest Ferrie, in late February, his investigation leaked to the press. However, on February 22, 1967, Ferrie's body was found in his apartment. (A few hours before he died, Ferrie had complained to George Lardner, of the Washington *Post*, that Garrison was persecuting him.) Dr. Nicholas Chetta, the coroner of Orleans Parish, concluded from the autopsy that Ferrie had died of natural causes—a cerebral hemorrhage brought about by the rupture of a blood vessel. Although Garrison suspected suicide or murder, he told me, he had not challenged the coroner's finding. Instead, a week later he had arrested a man named Clay Shaw for the assassination.

When I asked what Shaw had to do with the assassination, Garrison's reply was elliptical. "It's exactly like a chess problem," he said. "The Warren Commission moved the same pieces back and forth and got nowhere. I made a new move and solved the problem." He explained that the abrupt arrest had been timed to prevent Shaw from destroying any of his personal papers, and immediately afterward Garrison's men had gathered them up from Shaw's home, in the French Quarter. Garrison now offered to make this "important evidence" available to me.

EARLY the next morning, I went, with a research associate, Jones Harris, to the District Attorney's office suite, in the Criminal District Court Building, where Garrison had left word with an assistant district attorney named James C. Alcock that I "should start going through the evidence." Alcock brought in six cardboard cartons, which proved to contain such personal effects as letters, photographs, manuscripts, checkbooks, address books, calendars, blueprints for the renovation of houses in the French Quarter (one of Shaw's civic projects), and a Mardi Gras costume. Before leaving us alone with this material, Alcock said that the District Attorney's staff had yet to examine it fully. Even though a judge's order had forbidden disclosure or discussion of the evidence in the case, Garrison apparently had no compunction about turning it over to a journalist to peruse.

None of this material, as far as I could

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see, had any bearing on the conspiracy Garrison had described to me the night before, but Jones Harris discovered a striking coincidence: a five-digit number in Shaw's address book also appeared in Lee Harvey Oswald's address book. Oswald's book contained the number "19106" preceded by the Cyrillic letters "ДД," or "DD." Shaw's book contained an entry that read "Lee Odom, PO Box 19106, Dallas, Tex." If that match proved to be more than a coincidence, of course, it could provide a connection between Shaw and Oswald. Immediately after being apprised of this discovery by Harris, Garrison announced to the press that he had linked Shaw to Oswald. He stated without equivocation that Shaw's and Oswald's address books contained the identical entry "PO 19106" (a statement that was untrue), that this number was "nonexistent" (a fact that he had not determined), and that the number was a code, which had been deciphered and had produced the unlisted telephone number of Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby, and "no other number on earth" (statements that were also false). When Garrison was asked by a reporter how "PO 19106" had become Ruby's telephone number, "WH 1-5601," he replied, without missing a beat, that one simply rearranged the phone number's digits by alternately taking one from each end of the number (so that it became "PO 16901") and subtracted 1300.

It turned out that the post-office box 19106 in Dallas not only existed but had been assigned to Odom, the man listed in Shaw's address book. Shaw said that Odom had got in touch with him in 1966, in the hope of promoting a bloodless bullfight in New Orleans, and had left him his calling card, which accounted for the entry. In any case, Odom's post-office-box number could not possibly have been the number in Oswald's address book, because that box number had not existed in Dallas until it was assigned to Odom, in 1965; and, of course, Oswald had died in 1963. When Garrison was confronted with his false statements, he attempted to divert attention, first by saying that he wanted to find out "how many bullfights Mr. Odom has actually produced," and then by claiming that he had also found in Oswald's address book a number that, on being decoded, yielded what he said was the unlisted number of the Central Intelligence Agency in New Orleans—the same number that, at the time, was listed in the New Orleans telephone directory under "Central Intelligence Agency."

GARRISON'S unconventional methodology also accounted for the conspiracy charge at the center of his case against Clay Shaw. His allegation was that Clay Shaw, under the alias Clay Bertrand, had met with David Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald in Ferrie's apartment on a single occasion in September of 1963 and, in the presence of a fourth man, Perry Raymond Russo, plotted the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas. Ferrie and Oswald were now dead, and Shaw unequivocally denied that he had attended such a meeting (or, for that matter, that he knew either Oswald or Ferrie), so Garrison's only possible witness was Russo, a twenty-five-year-old insurance man from Baton Rouge, who in 1963 had been in the

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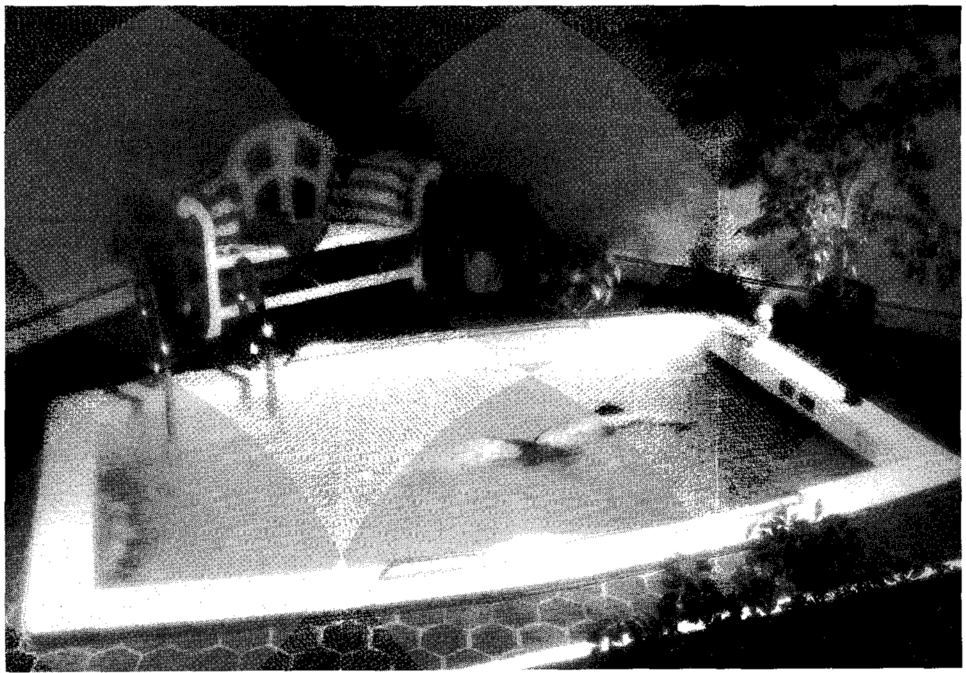

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pornographic-film business with Ferrie. But when Garrison announced, on February 23, 1967, that he had "positively solved the assassination," he had known nothing about Russo's story.

Russo's involvement with the case began when he appeared on a local television program the same night and told an interviewer that he had been acquainted with Ferrie, and that Ferrie had once mentioned to him how easy it would be to assassinate a President. Garrison developed Russo's bland story into one that had Russo saying he had witnessed the plot unfold. The day after seeing Russo on TV, Garrison dispatched Assistant D.A. Andrew (Moo-Moo) Sciambra, a former pugilist, to Baton Rouge to interview him. Russo's story, according to a lengthy written report submitted by Sciambra, contained virtually nothing that would validate Garrison's claims. Russo did not recall any meeting at which Ferrie, Oswald, Shaw, or anyone else had discussed assassinating President Kennedy, and when Sciambra showed him some photographs of Shaw he said that he had seen Shaw on only two occasions, and on those from afar: once at a political rally for Kennedy, and once in a car at a gasoline station.

Although this testimony left a gaping hole in Garrison's new theory, Garrison realized that Russo might be induced to fill in his story. On February 27th, he had Russo drugged with sodium pentothal and reinterrogated. While Russo was in a semiconscious state, Moo-Moo Sciambra introduced the subject of Clay Bertrand by asking Russo "if he could remember any of the details about Clay Bertrand being up in Ferrie's apartment." Under such prompting, Russo gradually began to expand his story. Next, Garrison had him hypnotized. A Dr. Esmond Fatter, whom Garrison hired for the task, told Russo to imagine a television screen in his mind: "There will be Bertrand, Ferrie, and Oswald. . . . They are talking about assassinating somebody." By the time Garrison finished these "verifying tests," as he called them, Russo had become his sole witness to the assassination plot.

The fact that Russo's testimony was hypnotically induced would eventually be exposed in court, Garrison realized, since the defense had a right to examine all the accuser's statements, but he artfully managed to stretch out the interval between the charge and the trial for more than twenty-two months while he engaged in a wide range of diversionary actions. At one point in 1967, for example, he had a man named Edgar Eugene Bradley, who was a fund-raiser for a California fundamentalist religious broadcast called "The Twentieth Century Reformation," arrested on the charge of conspiring to kill the President, even though, as Garrison's own bewildered staff confirmed, he had not a scintilla of evidence against this person other than an anonymous letter that accused a man named Eugene Bradley, who may or may not have been the one Garrison arrested, of making inflammatory comments about President Kennedy. During the course of his pretrial "investigations," Garrison also issued arrest warrants for three journalists, from whom he had previously sought publicity: he accused Walter Sheridan, of NBC, of "public bribery"; David Chandler, of *Life*, of "perjury"; and Richard Townley, of WDSU-TV, in New Orleans, of "intimidation of a witness."

Garrison also used this pretrial period, in which he had become the focus of national attention, to appear on network television programs. On the "Tonight Show," in January of 1968, when he was asked by Johnny Carson to reveal the new evidence that he claimed to have he reached into a black briefcase and pulled out some old news photographs he had obtained from the Dallas *Times Herald*, which were taken at the Texas Book Depository soon after the assassination and showed nothing more than a group of bystanders, at least two of whom worked in the building, being questioned by policemen. "Here are the pictures of five of them being arrested, and they've never been shown before," Garrison said, holding up the blurry prints, and he added, "Several of these men arrested have been connected by our office with the Central Intelligence Agency." It turned out later that he had not even determined the identity of the bystanders he was referring to, much less their organizational affiliations. He then told Carson, "An element of the Central Intelligence Agency of our country killed John Kennedy." By this time, what Garrison called "the forces behind the conspiracy" had proliferated considerably. When he began his investigation, in December of

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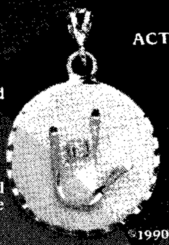

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1966, he had told Senator Long that only a few insignificant men were involved—meaning Ferrie and a few of his bizarre associates. After Ferrie's death, the conspiracy began to expand. He told me in early 1967, after he arrested Shaw, that the group included "perverts"—both Ferrie and Shaw were homosexual—and anti-Castro Cubans. Then, as he went from interview to interview, the conspiracy escalated to include oil millionaires, Dallas policemen, munitions exporters, paramilitary reactionaries, White Russians, elements of "the invisible Nazi substructure," and C.I.A. agents.

When the trial finally began, on January 21, 1969, Shaw's defense lawyer, Irvin Dymond, made short work of the credibility of Garrison's only witness to the conspiracy that was at issue. Moo-Moo Sciambra's memorandum describing Russo's pre-hypnosis story showed that Russo had originally excluded Shaw from any meeting in Ferrie's apartment he had witnessed. Moreover, during cross-examination Russo himself admitted that he had told Lieutenant Edward O'Donnell, of the New Orleans Police Department, that Shaw was probably not the man he had seen in Ferrie's apartment. This admission was made after Shaw had been arrested. Then, there was the matter of "Clay Bertrand," which Garrison said was the alias Shaw used when he met Russo. But at the trial a lawyer named Dean Andrews acknowledged that it was he who had introduced the name Clay Bertrand into the investigation, after the assassination, when he was interviewed by the Secret Service. Andrews now stated under oath that the name Bertrand was a fiction he had made up to protect the identity of another person, who was not Clay Shaw. So how could Russo assert that Clay Bertrand was the name Clay Shaw was using in September of 1963—unless the name had been fed to him by the prosecution?

Despite the apparent collapse of his case, Garrison had his assistants darken the courtroom and screen—ten times—the famous amateur film of the assassination made by Abraham Zapruder, so the jurors saw, over and over again, the gruesome scene of Kennedy's head being shattered by a bullet. Garrison's assistants also called a parade of aural witnesses, who testified that they had heard shots—or the echoes of shots—coming from different directions. He also presented, as a surprise witness, an impeccably dressed New Yorker named Charles I. Spiesel, who testified, matter-of-factly, that on a trip to New Orleans in May of 1963 he had found himself at a party where the assassination was being plotted by most of the same characters Russo had presumably seen at Ferrie's apartment. Under cross-examination, however, Spiesel admitted that he had for sixteen years been the victim of a vast conspiracy, in which the conspirators—who included policemen, his own psychiatrist, and some fifty hypnotists—followed him around New York, tapped his phones, caused him to make errors in his business, prevented him from having normal sexual relations, kept him under their hypnotic control, and were so proficient at assuming the identity of his relatives that he had repeatedly fingerprinted his own daughter to make sure she was not an impostor.

Garrison himself rarely appeared at the trial; he didn't show up even for the testimony or the cross-examination of the man he had accused of conspiring to kill the President. When he finally made his closing statement, a disjointed twenty-five-minute speech, he mentioned the defendant's name only once. Borrowing from Kennedy's celebrated inaugural address, he exhorted the jury, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country."

It took the jury less than an hour to reach its verdict: Shaw was not guilty. Two years to the day had elapsed since Shaw's arrest, and the cost of his legal defense had nearly bankrupted him. Although he left court on March 1, 1969, an acquitted man, he was not yet free of Garrison. Two days later, Garrison rearrested him and, in order to circumvent double-jeopardy restrictions, attempted to try him for perjury. Eventually, a federal court intervened, and quashed a new indictment that Garrison had obtained. Shaw died in 1974. So ended the part of Garrison's activities that involved legally testable evidence—an episode that the New York *Times* called "one of the most disgraceful chapters in the history of American jurisprudence."

THE ensuing press attacks on Garrison missed both the point and the power of his appeal. His crusade, which did not end for some twenty years (when it was enshrined in the movie), was not

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about forensic evidence—Shaw served merely as a convenient means to an end—but about something far more tormenting to his public: the conspicuous *absence* of evidence. Garrison concerned himself not with what existed and could be verified and tested by accepted procedures but with what was missing from the investigation, which he endlessly reeled off like a litany: the X-rays and autopsy photographs of President Kennedy's body (they had not been examined by the Warren Commission); four frames of the Zapruder film (they had not been published in the Warren Report); classified documents in the National Archives (they were to remain unavailable to the public for seventy-five years); the President's brain (it had vanished from government custody); bullets at the scene of the assassination (they had not been found); missing witnesses (or dead ones).

The very fact that such pieces of evidence were missing from the public record enabled Garrison to speculate at every opportunity about the systematic suppression of the true story of the assassination and the power of the forces behind this cover-up. Playing on the public's concern about and repugnance against government secrecy in a democracy, he asked why something would be kept from the public if it had no sinister implications. Once he had focussed the attention of his audience on missing evidence, he needed to take only a single rhetorical step in order to draw the most sinister connection between that and the succession to power. For example, he asked in an article he published in the magazine *Ramparts* in 1968, "Who controls the C.I.A.? Who controls the F.B.I.? Who controls the Archives where this evidence is locked up for so long that it is unlikely that there is anybody in this room who will be alive when it is released? This is really your property and the property of the people of this country. Who has the arrogance and the brass to prevent the people from seeing that evidence? Who indeed? The one man who has profited most from the assassination—your friendly President, Lyndon Johnson!"

While Garrison was certainly not the first to attack the dragon of missing evidence, he proved to be far more imaginative than earlier crusaders, such as Senator Joseph McCarthy, in using this mode of inquiry to project a vision of a grand

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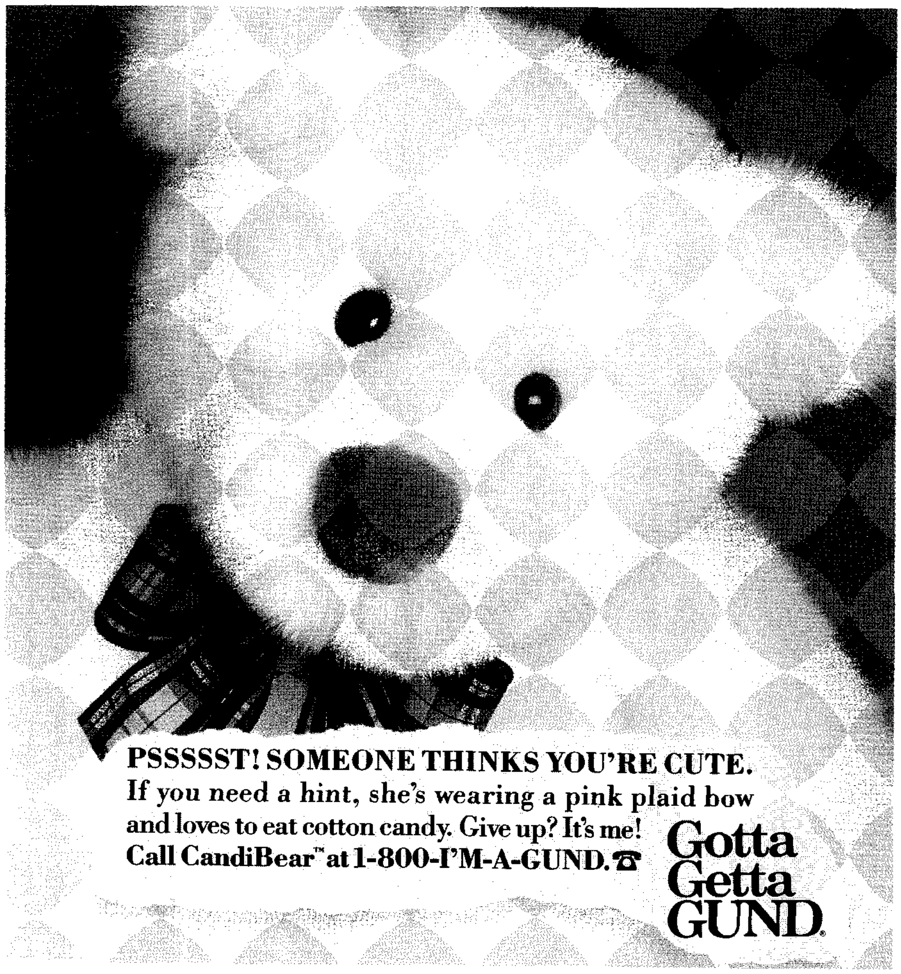

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conspiracy. Consider, for example, how he deduced President Johnson's participation in the conspiracy from what might have been a stray pebble. On one occasion, Garrison held up two newspaper photographs taken about ten minutes after the assassination. In the first one, an unidentified man in a dark suit is looking toward the curb on the street near the spot where President Kennedy was shot. Garrison announced that in this photograph he could discern, partly concealed in matted grass by the curb, a pebblelike object. His staff later concluded from a photographic enlargement that the object might indeed be a pebble. (The object is not apparent to the naked eye.) He then identified this object as a .45-calibre bullet, the one "which killed John Kennedy, which has markings on it that would show [that] the automatic gun from which it came [was a] handgun." He then deduced from the position of this "bullet" that the assassin must have been in a sewer in front of the President, and not in the Texas School Book Depository behind the President, as the Warren Commission had concluded. Even more amazing, from the second photograph he presented, which showed only the man walking away from the curb, Garrison deduced, first, that the man, who wore a dark suit, had to be "a federal agent" and, second, from the man's closed fist, that he had "the bullet clutched in his hand, the bullet that killed John Kennedy." Garrison never explained how he could know that a bullet was in a closed hand, or know its calibre, but he announced that since this .45-calibre bullet (or pebble) had been conspicuously missing from the inventory of the Warren Commission's evidence "the bullet which killed John Kennedy, which fell in the grass with pieces of the President's head, was in the hands of the federal government ten minutes after the President was dead." There was more: "This means that the federal government knowingly participated in framing Lee Oswald," and "Lyndon Johnson had to know this."

The gunman in the sewer was not the only member of the conspiracy that Garrison had derived from missing evidence in his protracted media campaign. He had previously posited a team of fourteen additional assassins, firing from four different spots, two of whom were probably assigned to pick up all the cartridge cases. (This was to explain why they were never found.) Since four frames of the Zapruder film had not been published in the Warren Report, he deduced that these missing frames revealed the telltale marks of a stray bullet on a street sign (the sign was also missing). When *Life*, which owned the Zapruder film, published the missing frames and they showed no traces of a bullet-scarred sign, Garrison suggested that the markings had been airbrushed out. Since a spectator at the scene, who fainted twenty minutes before the motorcade arrived, had not been identified in the Warren Report, Garrison claimed that this spectator had simulated an epileptic fit as part of a paramilitary diversionary action. The man involved in this supposed diversion turned out to be Jerry Boyd Belknap, an employee of the nearby Dallas *Morning News*, who had been taking medication for a head injury suffered in a car accident.

Because the autopsy X-rays of the President's body—such X-rays are often the best evidence of the path of the bullet, or bullets—were locked away in the National Archives, and not even the Warren Commission had examined them, Garrison reasoned that they showed the President to have been shot from the front in a crossfire, and not from the back, as the Warren Commission concluded. Since all tangible evidence of this "crossfire"—automatic rifles and .45-calibre pistols used by the assassins, cartridge cases ejected at four sniper nests, stray bullets, communications equipment to coördinate the gunfire, entry wounds in the President's neck—had vanished, Garrison concluded that the conspiracy possessed the "hidden machinery" necessary "to remove all stain and make it appear to have been something less." This capacity brought him back to the C.I.A. He asserted that it was "incinerating" evidence—that the Warren Commission had failed to obtain "a secret C.I.A. memo on Oswald's activities in Russia" because the memo had been "destroyed" the day after the assassination. (The fact is that the "secret C.I.A. memo" appears in Volume XVIII of the Warren Commission's twenty-six volumes of published testimony and evidence; only a State Department copy

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of the memo had been destroyed, in a photocopier.) Garrison cited, as his clincher, the ultimate missing evidence: the "consistent refusal of the Federal government" to provide "any information" about the C.I.A.'s role in the assassination.

In his book "A Heritage of Stone," which he wrote less than a year after the Clay Shaw trial (and in which he does not even mention Shaw), Garrison explains why many others failed to detect this enormous conspiracy. He sees Americans inhabiting the same country but living in two different realms of consciousness. The first realm is naïve and innocent, a place where everyone is duped by "the glitter of the official lies." In this realm, he says, "an individual cannot cope with the unseen forces of the superstate," because "his perception is limited by his assumption that things are as they appear to be and by his belief that he is living in a world in which evil is easily recognized." So, believing that what they see, hear, and read corresponds to reality, these Americans fail to realize that "an intricate contrivance of men for the clandestine production of illusion had become . . . a manipulator of America." He further explains, "The main reason for the inability of the American people and the press to recognize the conspiracy to kill President Kennedy was the fact that its operations all occurred in another dimension, a dimension which generally is not known to exist in our nation."

This second dimension, or realm, is both evil and manipulative. In it an "invisible government [that] begins and ends with deception" appropriates power to itself through assassinations, and conceals from the populace "government force that is as criminal as the Germany of Hitler or the Russia of Stalin." This "power élite," supported by "the military-industrial complex," was the hidden sponsor of the Vietnam War and the nuclear-arms race. To assure its invisibility, this élite employs technicians capable of inflicting on its enemies "heart attacks, falls, shootings by 'deranged' men and dozens of other kinds of misadventures." It engages in "thought control" over the media and, in the case of those who escape this "concentration camp of the mind," it stage-manages in the media "massive discreditation." This explains why "anyone seeking to inquire into the meaning of the assassination found himself in an enchanted maze which steadily led him away from reality."

Garrison, having broken out of this enchanted maze and penetrated deep into the other dimension, portrays himself as battling to wrest from the invisible élite the dark secrets that perpetuate its power. His weapon in this struggle is the missing evidence that he but not others can see and interpret.

WITH such a rarefied view of reality, Garrison did not need to modify his position when, midway through his twenty-year quest, much of the evidence that he had complained had been suppressed was made public. In 1978, a specially convened House Select Committee on Assassinations conducted its own investigation. Unlike the Warren Commission, in its more limited effort, the Select Committee delved into some of the deepest recesses of the C.I.A., the F.B.I., and other government agencies. It also addressed the issues raised by Garrison and other critics of the Warren Report (including me), by appointing various panels of independent experts to analyze crucial evidence that had been missing from the Warren Commission's investigation. Most notably, it cleared up the mystery surrounding the autopsy results by empanelling nine leading forensic pathologists—one of them Dr. Cyril H. Wecht, a respected critic of the Warren Report—to examine the complete set of X-rays and photographs taken of the President's body at the time of the autopsy and also the original Zapruder film of the assassination. These experts had among them experience in performing more than a hundred thousand autopsies.

The panel first established the authenticity of the autopsy photographs by having forensic scientists compare them with Kennedy's pre-mortem dental records and medical X-rays. Satisfied that the autopsy photographs were authentic and had not been tampered with, the committee went on to resolve discrepancies proceeding from the original autopsy by requestioning most of the medical personnel involved both in the emergency attempt to prolong the President's life at Parkland Memorial Hospital, in Dallas, and in the autopsy performed at the Naval Medical Center, in Bethesda, Maryland. The panel also reëxamined the medical records of Gov-

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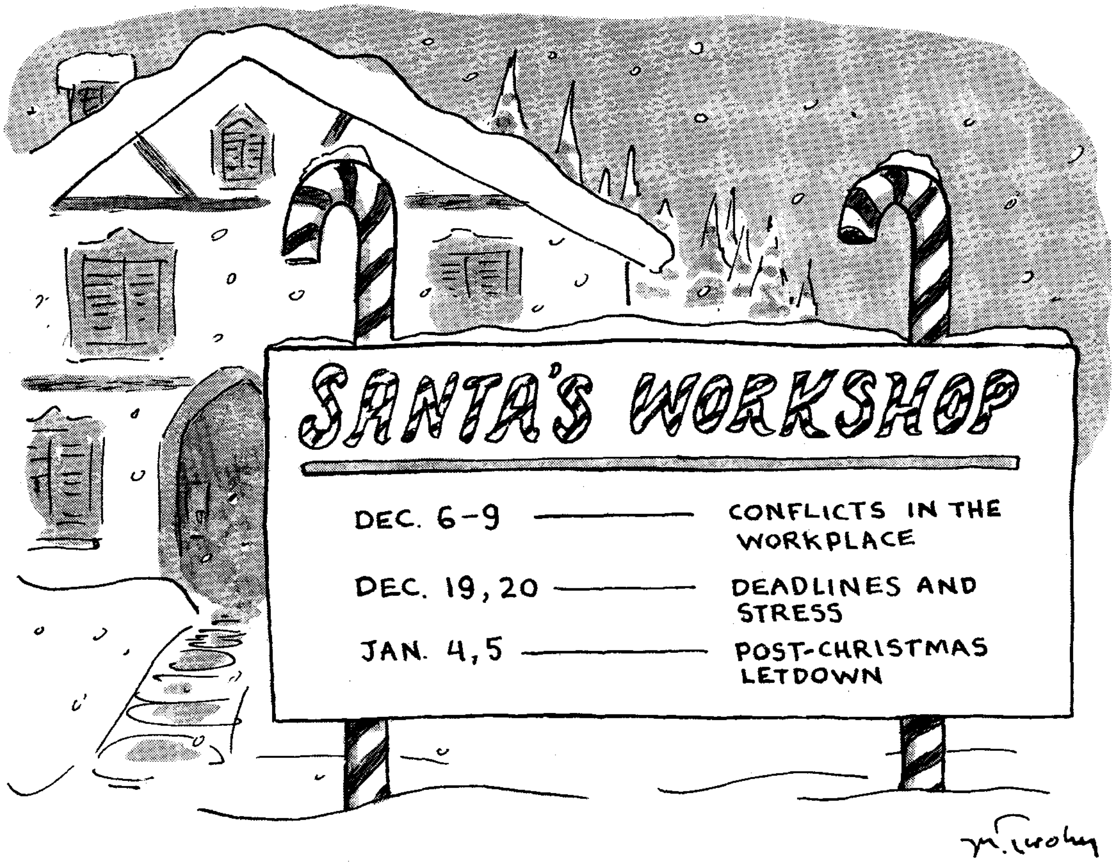
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ernor John B. Connally, of Texas, who had been seated in front of the President, and had also been wounded in the fusillade. The panel then examined the autopsy X-rays and photographs; such X-rays often provide clear evidence of the path of a bullet, because as a bullet advances through the body it may well do progressively more damage. The panel was thus able to determine that one bullet hit the President in the upper right of the back—two inches lower than the Warren Commission's diagram had placed it—and that a second bullet entered the right rear of the President's head near the cowlick area and exited from the right side of the head. These doctors took into account a frame-by-frame analysis of the Zapruder film, which showed that the President's head had moved backward at the time of impact, not forward, as might have been expected; but, because of possible neurological reactions to the head wound, they decided that there was no relationship between the direction that the head moved and the direction from which the bullet struck it. So, although they disagreed as to the precise sequence of the shots that hit President Kennedy and Governor Connally, they concluded, as the Warren Commission had, that all the discernible wounds suffered by the two men had been caused by shots fired from behind them.

Moreover, a panel of firearms experts ballistically matched the identifiable fragments of the bullets found in the limousine with the rifle found at the Texas School Book Depository. And a study done for the committee, using a technique called neutron-activation analysis, in which even a billionth of a gram of elements found in bullet lead can be analyzed by bombarding them with neutrons in a nuclear reactor, concluded that the composition of all the traces of bullet fragments recovered from the President and from the murder scene matched that of the unfired cartridge found in the chamber of the rifle in the Texas School Book Depository, purchased earlier that year by Lee Harvey Oswald.

In the light of the methodical and open nature of this examination, there was no mystery left if one believed that the evidence was what it purported to be. One gun, from one site, the Texas School Book Depository, using one lot of ammunition, had killed Kennedy. While it remained possible that someone else had fired another rifle and missed Kennedy entirely (as the House Assassinations Committee itself suggested in its final report), according to this no longer missing evidence the President was shot from behind, not by teams of assassins in a crossfire from the front (the grassy knoll), the side, underground (the sewer), or a building other than the book depository, as Garrison had suggested.

Not surprisingly, Garrison continued to focus on the evidence that was still missing rather than on what had been revealed (and was now ipso facto suspect), since he could without fear of refutation sketch out on the former whatever design he envisioned. So he deftly moved from the subject of the autopsy X-rays and photographs to that of the President's brain, which had been returned by the government in 1965 to his brother Robert F. Kennedy and then, presumably, buried in the President's grave. In "On the Trail of the Assassins," his third book, which was published in 1988, Garrison wrote, "The brain, which is still missing . . . might have shown from what directions the head shots came"—and thus slipped back in, through the polemical pluralization of "direction" and "shot," those conspirators who could not be discerned by the examination of the X-rays and autopsy pictures. The ghoulish idea that the President's brain was "missing" from the National Archives—as if that were the proper repository for Presidential remains—could intensify the public's torment over government secrecy. Garrison also continued hammering away at the documents still sealed in the National Archives—ominously mentioning their cryptic titles—and citing "the order to conceal assassination evidence for 75 years by the federal government."

Actually, there was no such order. Many investigative files are withheld by law for seventy-five years—a number chosen arbitrarily to exceed the life span of persons likely to be mentioned in government reports, and so to protect their privacy—but in the case of the Warren Commission material President Johnson requested that this requirement be waived whenever possible and ordered all documents opened to the public except

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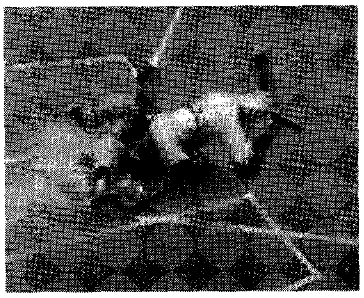

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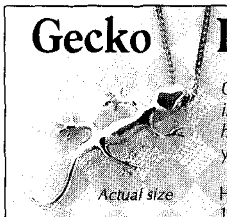

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those containing the names of confidential informers, information damaging to innocent parties, and information about agency operating procedures. A million or so pages were then made available to the public. Moreover, even the documents that remain classified under these guidelines contain no secrets other than those which the C.I.A., the F.B.I., the State Department, and other agencies voluntarily turned over to the Warren Commission. So even if all this information were released one could still call for "missing" files—that is, those that were not delivered to the Warren Commission.

NONE of Jim Garrison's legerdemain, or his insights into the demonology of the second dimension, had much effect on his political career. After his debacle in the Shaw trial, after he was denounced by a local newspaper for being "a man without principle who would pervert the legal process to his own ends," and after it was disclosed that he had been discharged from the military for psychiatric reasons, he still easily won reëlection in 1969 to a third term as district attorney, with a respectable fifty-three per cent of the vote. When he was denied a second shot at Clay Shaw, he more or less gave up on the prosecutorial route, and quietly dropped the dozen or so collateral indictments against critical journalists, defecting employees, and recalcitrant witnesses—including a perjury case against Dean Andrews, the lawyer who had fabricated the name Clay Bertrand. So, in the end, no one went to prison because of Garrison's conspiracy case. He thereafter concentrated his efforts instead on television talk shows and media interviews.

Near the end of his third term, in 1973, Garrison found himself in the dock as a defendant, being tried on federal charges of accepting bribes and conspiring to protect illegal pinball gambling. Although, acting as his own attorney, he won an acquittal for himself, he lost his subsequent bid for reëlection to a fourth term that year—no doubt because he himself had been indicted as a conspirator. Returning to private life, he wrote a fast-paced assassination thriller, "The Star Spangled Contract," which demonstrated his talent for creating fiction. Retaining his flair for politics, he successfully campaigned in 1978 for a seat on Louisiana's Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. While on the court, he tried his hand at film acting, playing a New Orleans judge in "The Big Easy." For most of the world outside Orleans Parish, however, he had become a discredited man. His prosecution of Clay Shaw was almost universally regarded, even by his former staff members, as a mistake—a mistake that ruined the life of an innocent man. His repeated media fabrications, such as the pebble that became the "missing bullet," had left him with only an insignificant audience of true believers. Even assassination buffs found that his demagogic obsession with missing rather than existent evidence had made him a menace to any serious inquiry into the facts surrounding the assassination.

Garrison's apocalyptic vision of a secret élite operating from the second dimension might have faded into obscurity if it had not been for Oliver Stone, who read "On the Trail of the Assassins" in 1988 and decided it had potential. He later remarked to Robert Sam Anson, in *Esquire*, "It read like a Dashiell Hammett whodunit. It starts out as a bit of a seedy crime with small traces, and then the gum-shoe district attorney follows the trail, and the trail widens and widens, and before you know it, it's no longer a small-town affair. That seemed to me the kernel of a very powerful movie." He paid Garrison two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the rights to the book, and hired him as a guide to the other dimension.

So, a generation after the trial of Clay Shaw, Garrison rose from the ashes, phoenixlike, in Hollywood. He was once again reunited with Perry Raymond Russo, the star witness he had hypnotized into recalling an assassination plot; this time, both were actors in Stone's "JFK,"—Garrison as Chief Justice Earl Warren, Russo as a barfly. In this final incarnation, Garrison achieved in fiction what he had failed to do in fact: he found a worldwide audience of millions for his proclamations of the existence of a secret élite that through its assassinations and coups d'état had accounted for ten years of war in Vietnam. Through the medium of the movie, Garrison may yet incorporate in the popular imagination (or, at least, among those in the audience confused by Stone's blurring of fact and fiction) all the claims and outright delusions he derived from missing evidence, hypnosis, and encounters with forces from the second dimension. ♦

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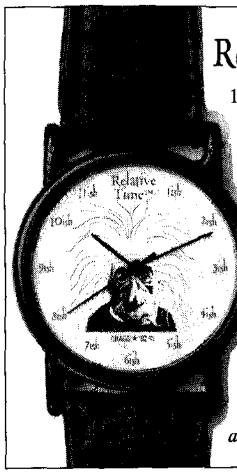

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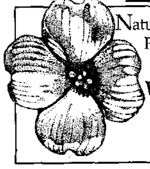

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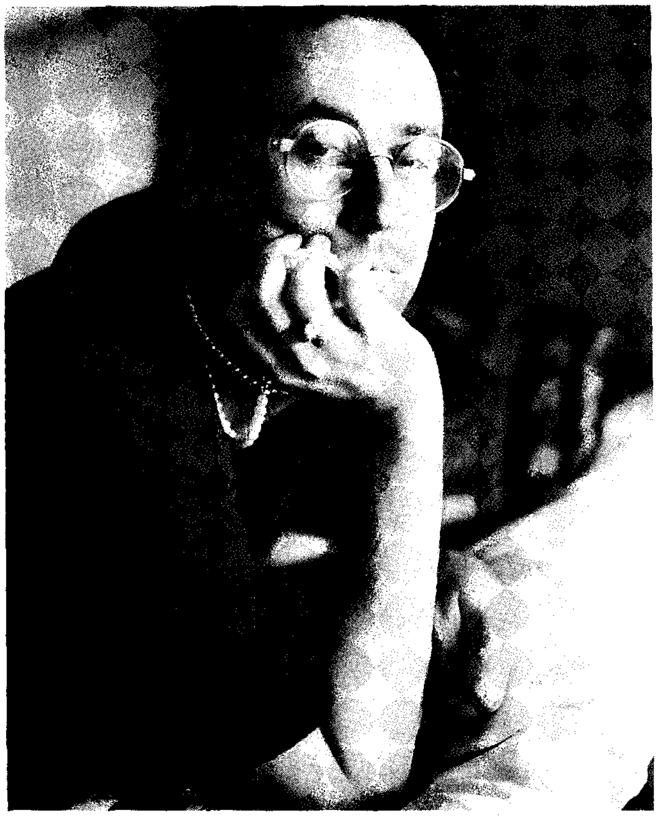
ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

TONY KUSHNER'S PARADISE LOST

by Arthur Lubow


KEN SCHLES

A playwright haunted by unconditional love, the guilt of survival, and Roy Cohn.

TONY KUSHNER marks the date of his coming out as September, 1981, when he called his mother from an East Village pay phone to tell her he was gay. That was about the time doctors first detected a strange new syndrome afflicting male homosexuals and eight months before Kushner met and then moved in with his first lover. Seven years later, when he began writing "Angels in America," he was newly separated, and AIDS was the dominant feature of the gay landscape. Kushner, however, did not set out to record the horror of AIDS alone but the horror of American life during the nineteen-eighties—the triumph of heartlessness and the withering of community. His two-part, seven-hour-long play, subtitled "A Gay Fantasia on National Themes," might also be called a Reagan fantasia, commemorating a time when selfishness was extolled as a social good and self-sacrifice scorned as psychopathology, an era when people, jammed into predrilled holes, not surprisingly splintered. Kushner's characters do the wrong thing: a young word processor at a courthouse deserts his AIDS-stricken lover, and a Mormon law clerk in the same courthouse stifles his homosexuality, thus gutting his own life and that of his wife. To the story of these two imaginary couples Kushner adds the corrosive figure of the late Roy Cohn. Writing in this magazine last week, John Lahr declared that in the two halves of "Angels" ("Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika") Kushner has "made a little piece of American theatre history." He wrote, "From its first beat, 'Angels in America' exhibited a ravishing command of its characters and of the discourse it wanted to have through them with our society."

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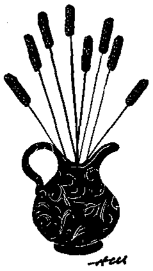
doubles up with pain at the prospect of losing the person she loves, or when, buffeted by disgust and self-disgust, the word processor wavers in his commitment to his ill friend, it's natural to think that the playwright is telling the story of his own life. He isn't and, in a way, he is. Audiences will assume, correctly, that Kushner at one stage choked back his homosexual longings to conform to other people's wishes: the question of sexual identity formed the central struggle of his adolescence. But, because much of the AIDS literature is so heavily autobiographical, audiences may also infer—wrongly—that Kushner has cared for, or not cared for, a sick lover. As it happened, at the time he began the play no one close to him had been felled by AIDS. He did know the maelstrom of anger, confusion, and self-doubt when faced with a catastrophe befalling the person dearest to him; however, that person was not his gay lover, but a straight woman. Unlike those writers who have veiled their personal experience with AIDS beneath a different illness or a poetic metaphor, Kushner took AIDS—a political issue too big to ignore—and poured into it the survivor's guilt, the rage of the sick at the healthy, the caretaker's balancing of self-sacrifice and self-interest, which he knew from tending to his injured friend. "I have spattered our relationship all over this play," he said when an early version of the work was performed in 1988.



Bullnecked and lamb-faced, Kushner, thirty-six, projects awkward strength and a sweet enthusiasm, winging tenacity and fluttering insecurity. He is tall, large (in the anxious five months before the Los Angeles première, he put on thirty pounds), dark-haired, and bespectacled, with a bent for post-undergraduate denim wear and message buttons: on his black jeans jacket are a baby picture of Lenin inside a red star, a "Defy Section 28" badge, a Keith Haring man bashing a TV set, and a falling angel. Kushner grew up in the Louisiana bayou town of Lake Charles, as part of a small Jewish minority and, as far as he knew, a homosexual minority of one. He gives the star turn in "Angels" to Roy Cohn because as a child he was mesmerized by him. At age eleven, on his father's recommendation, he read Fred Cook's "The Nightmare Decade," an account of Senator Joseph McCarthy's anti-Communist rampages. He recalls that he "fixated" on Cohn, the Senator's trusted assistant: "There was this sniggering sense that he was gay." Despising Cohn's politics, Kushner felt "a grim satisfaction" when, years later, the wheeler-dealer lawyer and Studio 54 habitué died of AIDS (he claimed it was liver cancer), disbarred and disgraced. Kushner was jolted out of his enjoyment by an article in *The Nation*, written by Robert Sherrill, that equated Cohn's corrupt political life with his sleazy sex life. About this time, a panel was added anonymously to the Names Project quilt. It read, "Roy Cohn. Bully. Coward. Victim." "I was fascinated," Kushner says. "People didn't hate McCarthy so much—they thought he was a scoundrel who didn't believe in anything. But there was a venal little monster by his side, a Jew and a queer, and this was the real object of detestation."

Writing the character of Cohn offered Kushner what he calls "a maliciously exuberant expression for my own dark side." He says, "I think I have a great deal of self-hatred, a profound feeling of fraudulence, of being detestable and evil. It's only a part of me, but it's there, and it's active." It would be reductionist, but not inaccurate, to surmise that Kushner's dark side stems from his realization, very early in life, that he was different in a way his parents wished him to fix. His mother, Sylvia Kushner, avoided the problem: she was a woman with a great capacity for denial. When Tony's older sister, Lesley, was born partly deaf, their mother was the principal bassoonist in the orchestra of the New York City Opera, in which her husband, Bill, played second clarinet. Refusing to acknowledge any physical malady, Sylvia decided that Lesley wasn't learning to speak because her parents were too frequently away, performing. "My mother was so eager to believe this that she made major life decisions without having Lesley tested," Kushner says. Sylvia retired from professional music and moved the family to Lake Charles, where Bill managed the lumber business started there by his grandfather and later became the conductor of the Lake Charles Symphony Orchestra.

Bill Kushner was a more interventionist parent. It wounded him that his son was a "sissy," teased by other little boys. He made a point of taking him to play ball and to exercise. When Tony reached puberty, he lectured him on the role of sexual reproduction in the natural order. "He told me about bull mooses and cow mooses," Kushner recalls. His father counselled him not to surrender to homosexuality: "He said that if you fall off a horse you have to get back on. I had no intention of getting back on." Soon after the phone call to his mother in 1981, Tony wrote his parents an angry letter. "I felt they had to acknowledge a parental failure," he says. "Instead of looking at me and seeing what I was all about and trying to make a world in which I would be at home being who I was, they had chosen to make things comfortable for themselves. The way you give love is the most profoundly human part of you. When people say it's ugly or a perversion or an abomination, they're attacking the center of your being. I said to them, 'You can't love me without understanding that I'm gay. My being gay is central to the person you pretend to care about. I won't accept anything less than that. I don't want to be tolerated.' "

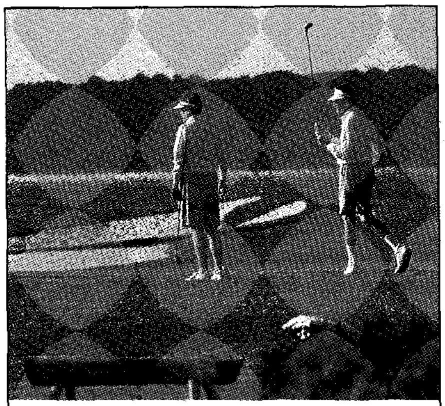
It was a family battle; it was also a political battle. His mother soon came around. His father took much longer, but the acclaim for Tony's homosexually oriented play has made a big difference. A tall, white-haired, dignified man who looks the part of an orchestra conductor, Bill Kushner respects poets and composers above all others. He once wrote to Tony saying that he would not have been proud even to be Tchaikovsky's father. ("This was the last gasp," the elder Kushner explains. "This was my last hope of turning it around.") But after thinking about it, he took back his words. "If I were Tchaikovsky's father," he said, "I would be so proud I couldn't see straight." A week before "Angels" opened in Los Angeles, Bill Kushner smiled delightedly. "I turned out to be Tchaikovsky's father," he said.

Tony Kushner has never felt completely at ease in the gay community. "I feel outside just by temperament and nerdishness," he says. "I tend to be sort of quiet and shy and awkward in social situations. I didn't have sex with a man until I was twenty-one, and wasn't really out until I was twenty-four or twenty-five. I don't dance. There are issues of weight and attractiveness. And my closest relationship is with a heterosexual woman." The woman is Kimberly Flynn, a native of New Orleans who is currently a graduate student in English at the City University of New York. An interest in theatre and a Louisiana background drew them together as undergraduates at Columbia University, but their affinity, they soon perceived, went far deeper. They both liked to read social theory, literary criticism, and history; they believed passionately in the need for social transformation; and they combined a Marxist political perspective with a truly compulsive interest in Freudian analysis. "I've learned more from Kim than from anybody else on earth," Kushner says. "She explained Marx to me, and she explained Freud to me. For a long time, I was following wherever she went." Like Freud, Flynn does not believe in accidents. "There's something she once said to me—that being her friend meant permanently losing your innocence," Kushner recalls. "Everything is suspect, because everything is readable and motivated." They have scrutinized their relationship until every crevice was dusted and exposed. Kushner believes that without his exchanges and dramas with Flynn he could not have written "Angels." She agrees.

"Being in a relationship with Kim for twelve years is a persistent pursuit and analysis of parapraxis," Kushner says. (A parapraxis is a slip of the tongue or some other bungle that, according to Freud, reveals an unconscious motivation. In a key scene in "Perestroika," Harper, the Mormon law clerk's wife, says "Look at me, look at me, what do you see?" and he responds, in irritation, "Nothing." As the word reverberates, she stares at him in horror. Although intending to avoid the issue, he has instead told the exact truth.) "I got onto the idea of parapraxes because they convey a great deal of information in one little slip," Kushner says. "The labor to find that was mine, and it wasn't easy. I don't want to give up the credit for that. But what do you call Kim? You can say 'dramaturge,' but no one knows what it means, and it sounds like 'turd.' She has a level of brilliance far beyond my own, and I have benefitted immensely from that. I do feel that she is some kind of genius. If the work has a dimension beyond me, she deserves credit."

Kushner's friendship with Flynn deepened when he graduated from Columbia, with a degree in medieval studies, and went on to study theatre directing at New York University. Along with several other theatre students, he supported himself by working as a switchboard operator at the United Nations Plaza Hotel. He and his friends (including his then lover, Mark Bronnenberg, and Flynn) founded a theatre group for which he wrote and directed plays. His 1982 dance-theatre piece, "La Fin de la Baleine: An Opera for the Apocalypse," was heavily influenced by Flynn's ideas on sadomasochism and environmental destruction. "It was about bad love, the blues, the bomb, and bulimia," says the actor Stephen Spinella, who has appeared in Kushner's work since 1981 and plays Prior Walter, the man who has AIDS, in "Angels." In its first version, "La Fin de la Baleine" included a dance on point for a woman who holds a tuba and, at one juncture, spouts water from her mouth. Though the ideas came mainly from Flynn, Kushner created most of the images and got all of the official credit, provoking bitterness and guilt between them. Kushner cites the tension as one reason he turned away from free-form imagery to a plotted narrative for his next play, "The Heavenly Theatre," about a sixteenth-century peasant uprising in France.

The bond between Kushner and Flynn is as tightly and intricately knotted as a marriage tie. "People don't know what to make of our relationship, because there isn't a name for it," Kushner says. "We're not lovers, not husband and wife, not best friends. I'm gay, and she's a straight woman. It's difficult to have a primary love object to whom one is not sexually attracted. It's difficult to be a gay man and to be in a relationship that would be a marriage. She is my ideal partner in all ways but one. Kim has called it life's ugly little joke." More precisely, it is one of life's ugly little jokes. On a drizzly morning eight years ago, this person who refused to believe in accidents was confronted, horribly, by a piece of counter-evidence. Reading Freud's "The Interpretation of Dreams" in a taxi that was speeding up the West Side Highway, Flynn realized that the driver had lost control of the car. The last thing she remembers is hurtling through Riverside Park. When she re-



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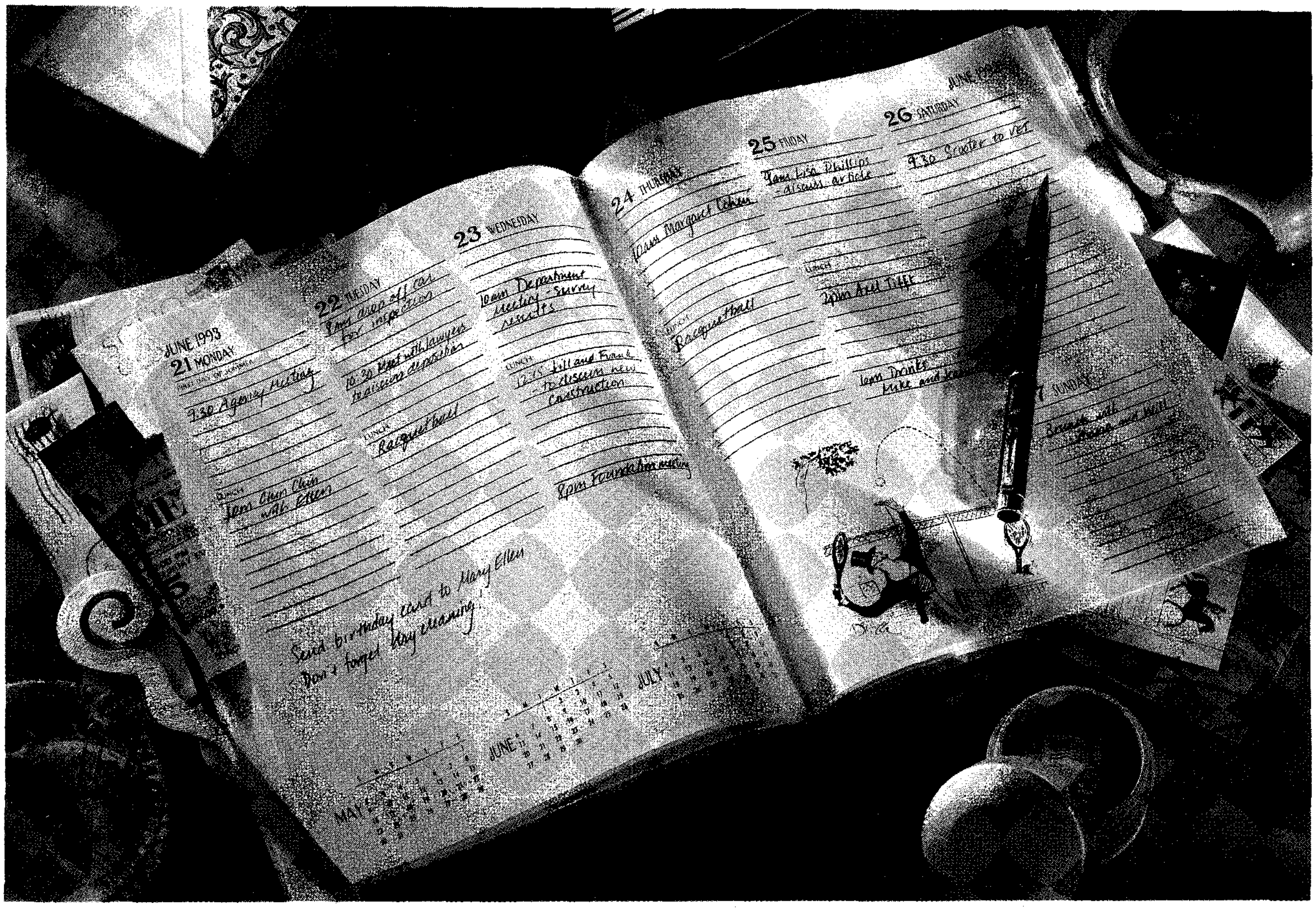
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gained consciousness, there was a tree next to her in the back seat and blood on her head. She hailed a passerby who took her to a hospital and, at her request, left a message for Kushner. In the emergency room, Flynn could not distinguish left from right. She was repeating herself unintentionally. Over the next few days, she realized that she was mangling her sentence structure. She was in a graduate program of clinical psychology at the time, and she had read some basic neuropsychology. She recognized the symptoms of brain damage.

KIMBERLY FLYNN, thirty-six, has a wide Irish face, frizzy auburn hair, deep-set green-gray eyes, and an engaging grin. She has come a long way back since the accident, but not, she makes it clear, all the way back. Whiplash has left her with persistent pain. Brain-stem trauma has caused physiological damage. Even worse, her brain injury has slowed her reading speed and weakened what was once an exceptionally precise memory. "I want you to understand how unexpected, how rude it was that this happened," she says. "You go and put all your eggs in the brain basket, and they're all smashed up. I was in the clinical-psych program, and I couldn't read. I felt like I had a brick tied to my tongue. It's like it's not your own body anymore; some demon has taken control of it. Once, I was with Tony and my mother, and I just stopped talking, because I couldn't get out a sentence the way I wanted. I mean subject-verb-object sentences: 'This meat is good.' The words would get all twisted." A month after the accident, Flynn belatedly received her college diploma: "I was in a knee brace, a figure-eight brace, a sling, and a cervical collar, and I was slurring my speech and I couldn't remember the last names of my friends. I go and pick up my Barnard diploma, and I think, What should I do with it? Should I set it on fire?"

It took Kushner some time to concede that Flynn's injuries were severe and, to some extent, permanent. As she wrestled to understand what was wrong with her and how to begin to remedy it, he became her sounding board, her medical guide, her companion in doctors' offices. At the same time, he had to cope with her confusion and her anger. She was bitter about the senselessness of the calamity and consumed with self-loathing for her handicaps. She was furious at her doctors, who administered routine pinprick tests despite her protests that her problems were cognitive, not neurophysiological. And she was, of course, furious at Tony. "It's very hard dealing with someone who started out with the same bag of marbles as you and then some of your marbles are lost and some are cracked," she says. "It's hard dealing with the fact that you may throw your rage in the face of friends who are not intellectually impaired. It was hard to deal with how angry I was, and with the idea that I was jealous and that I was in no position to be jealous—I was out of the game."

In 1985, a year after the accident, Kushner won one of seven yearlong National Endowment for the Arts directing fellowships, to work as an assistant director at the St. Louis Repertory Theatre. For an insecure aspiring director who was toiling at a hotel switchboard, the fellowship was a godsend. However, it required him to be separated from Flynn. As their interpersonal style dictates, they argued back and forth over whether he should go. In the end, he did. But when an unexpected opportunity arose for him to direct on his own a St. Louis production of Christopher Durang's "The Marriage of Bette and Boo," he regretfully declined, because the dates conflicted with a difficult shoulder operation that he had promised Flynn he would be there for. "I've had to make the hardest decisions of my life around Kim's illness," Kushner says. "During the time I was in St. Louis, I left twice to go through operations with her. She came to see me, and we were in constant telephone communication." Yet he questions his decision to pursue his career at the price of leaving Flynn, and his subsequent choice to exploit dramatically what is, at bottom, her misfortune. " 'Millennium' is completely infused with dealing with the consequences of the accident," he says. "There's a certain injustice in it. Not being the injured one gives me the physical freedom it takes to sustain a long writing project. You have a strange relationship with calamity when you're a writer: you write about it; as an artist, you objectify and fetishize it. You render life into material, and that's a creepy thing to do." If Kushner didn't run away from illness, he hardly feels triumphant. He thinks about guilt; he thinks about abandonment. "I'm seven

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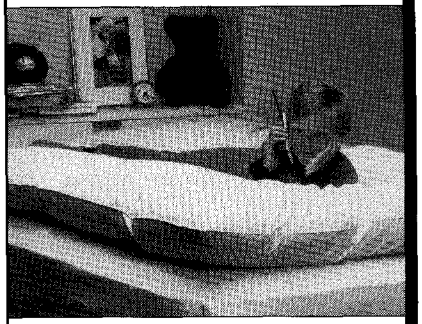

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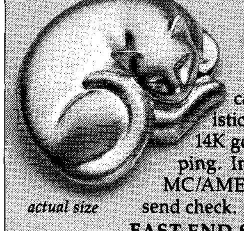

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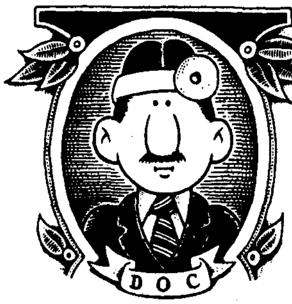

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years older now,” he says. “There are things that I’ve done in the course of this illness that I would do differently if I could.”

In the summer of 1990, with no warning, Sylvia Kushner was found to have inoperable lung cancer. She died six weeks later. In an already intense family, the tie between Tony and his mother had been exceptionally intense. His sister, Lesley, says, “They were very similar people, with a kind of psychological telepathy to other people, and tremendous warmth. She was also very political. And she loved the theatre.” Kushner dreamed one night that his mother was sitting on her tombstone, dressed in her hospital gown, drenched by a tropical storm. Another night, he dreamed that she was lost in the woods outside the family home in Lake Charles. “One thing I learned from my mother’s death is that until you go through a major loss you don’t realize what is taken from you,” he says. A year later, still mourning, Kushner went to a cabin by the Russian River, in Northern California, to write “Perestroika.” He brought with him a first act of a hundred and six pages. Eight days later, he returned to San Francisco with a two-hundred-and-ninety-three-page complete draft. “I guess it was ready to get written,” he says. “I was really horrified at how much there was.” On the drive back, still thinking about his mother, he turned on the radio. “The first thing I heard was ‘American Pie,’ ” he says. “Then that Paul Simon song ‘They’ve all come to look for America.’ Then ‘She Talks to Angels.’ Then the station faded out as I drove, and, without my changing the dial, it went into Mozart’s bassoon sonata, with a long bassoon part that my mother used to practice. Then it faded out again.”

As “Millennium Approaches” is charged with conflicts about caretaking and responsibility, so “Perestroika” is permeated with a sense of absence, abandonment, and loss. Although the characters in “Perestroika” still love their former partners, they must face life alone; and hanging over all of them is a larger abandonment—the disappearance of God (here portrayed as an offstage character who walked out at the time of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake). Questions are raised but not answered. Kushner wanted, his friend Brian Kulick says, “to have not a happy ending or a depressing ending but a true ending.”

While Kushner was writing “Millennium Approaches,” in 1988, he accepted a seven-hundred-dollar commission from the New York Theatre Workshop to adapt Corneille’s seventeenth-century French play “The Illusion.” (Until then, Kushner’s only play to have been commercially produced was “A Bright Room Called Day,” which drew explicit parallels between Germany in 1933 and America under Reagan. It flopped in New York.) “One thing that makes Tony a great writer is that he could read this text, and it was as if he put it in a drawer for two days and then wrote it from his own sensibility,” Kulick, who directed “The Illusion” in New York, says.

“Angels in America” will come to New York this winter. Originally scheduled to open at the Joseph Papp Public Theatre, it may ride the raves directly to Broadway. Kushner will decide that by Thanksgiving weekend. He has about a month of rewrites to do on “Perestroika.” Once “Angels” opens, he can proceed to the next items on the agenda: a movie version of “The Illusion,” for Universal Pictures; a script about the *Daily News* strike for “American Playhouse”; a new version of “The Heavenly Theatre,” to début in Los Angeles; an adaptation of “The Dybbuk,” in Hartford; and a historical play, “Dutch Masters,” about Vermeer and one of his paintings. He thinks he would like to write about F. O. Matthiessen, the Harvard critic of American literature who, subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee and grieving for a dead lover, committed suicide in 1950. He worries that he will never get it all done, yet castigates himself for taking on so many writing commitments that he has no time for direct political work. He wonders if his wandering from city to city, supervising new productions, is enervating his personal life. He worries. Yet if he didn’t worry so much, that would also make him worry.

On his left hand he wears a ring that belonged to his mother, a dark-green stone in a delicate gold setting. On closer examination, the stone can be seen to be lightly flecked with red. “It’s called a bloodstone,” Kushner remarks. “They say the longer you wear it, the more blood appears.” He seems to find the prospect heartening. ♦

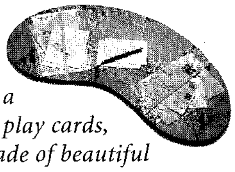
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

LARA HARWOOD

JULIE: ARTISANS' GALLERY, at 687 Madison Avenue (62nd), is selling some necklaces that a tree might choose if it could decorate itself. On black leather cords Cara Croninger has hung single vivid chunks of polyester resin that glow like pieces of winter fruit and look like free-form, knobby hearts. The colors span a spectrum from ruby red to apple green, and the hearts range from the size of a Globe grape to a Bosc pear. The pieces are either left matte or polished to a high shine, and the prices start at $50. For evenings out, the shop also has an exotic collection of bow ties. Two by Susie Freeman, which clip on, have been knitted out of nylon monofilaments: one has small gold shavings incorporated in a dragonfly-blue-and-black knit, and the other is black and scattered with a rainbow's worth of paillettes. The ties are $50 each. Another bow tie, by the German designers Claudia Eckert and Coco Syring, is woven of strands of black leather and white leather and is attached to a black satin neckband. A version combining black and Christmas red is also available. They are $96 each.

Royal Copenhagen / Georg Jensen, 683 Madison Avenue (61st), has long been a standard-bearer of beautiful and functional design. The best of the Danish silversmith's work, still faithfully reproduced by the firm that carries his name, is now a decade shy of a century old, but it is difficult to find pieces anywhere that are less easily dated than his signature brooches, necklaces, and bracelets, which combine an Edwardian sensibility with a stylized edge that seems wholly contemporary. Jensen's favorite motifs were flora and fauna. On alternating links of a sterling-silver bracelet, a bird preens between two horizontal trios of moonstones, and a brooch has an amber oval the size of a quail's egg cupped in the outline of a silver tulip. Other pieces feature running deer, swimming fish, wheat sheaves, and leaves. Any one of them would add a touch of the Forest of Arden to the most humdrum day. Prices range from $200 to about $3,500. Jensen is also a good source for both men's and women's wristwatches—timely gifts with which to clock the first hundred days. A sterling-silver tank watch, with ordinary hands but without numbers, is $795. The rounded border of the silver case is a quarter inch thick. A woman's watch designed by Vivianna Torun Bülow-Hübe in 1968 has a stainless-steel half-circle bracelet, and the face is a mirror without numbers. The price is $1,100. A new watch without numbers has hands that look like the folded wings of an origami bird. It is designed by Allan Scharff, whose intention was to point up how time flies. The price is $1,020. A plainer watch, with dots replacing numbers, designed by Henning Koppel, has a case of stainless steel and a round face. It's $595. All the watches except the one by Bülow-Hübe have black leather bands, but



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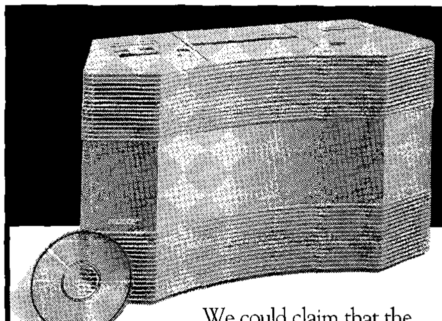

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LATELY, many specialty shops in the city are becoming more like general stores. The Floris Shop, a soap merchant at 703 Madison Avenue (63rd), has some very pretty clocks. The largest ones stand about six inches tall, and the cases are either wood or tooled leather. The parchment faces, which are under glass, are enlivened by painted flowers—mainly roses and stephanotis—that resemble old botanical prints. The clocks are for decoration more than for active duty, since they have neither second hands nor alarms (although in one or two examples a shadow of a second hand is painted on the dial). The prices range from $65 to $150. Pure sterilized boar-bristle bath brushes with twenty-four-inch handles are $25, and Floris's No. 89 cologne for men is $34.50 for two and a half ounces. (The name refers to the address of Floris's flagship store at 89 Jermyn Street, London.) Badger shaving brushes are $35, and a box of three bath tablets of Floris's soaps—jasmine, lily of the valley, or sandalwood—which weigh a hefty five and a quarter ounces each, costs $22.50. Next to the register, Floris has a collection of miniature Limoges porcelain perfume boxes, each of which holds one or two empty doll-size glass bottles. The boxes look, variously, like little cottages, tiny gazebos, and Lilliputian treasure chests. There are vegetable-shaped snuffboxes as well, among them a hot pepper and a chubby garlic. The boxes, which fit into the palm of the hand, range in price from $110 to $220. And, for someone who can't bear to leave anything around in its original store packaging, Floris can supply a chrome-plated box made to hold a small pack of facial tissues—the kind that usually comes wrapped in plastic. The box is $15.

Four blocks uptown and across the street, the Mediterranean Shop, at 780 Madison Avenue (67th), on the site of the old Thaxton shop, can provide a solution for a larger problem—telephone books—in the form of stiff cardboard cases covered with bright Italian marbled paper. The actual phone-book covers are inserted in flaps inside the case, and one can mark the page of one's favorite phone number with an attached grosgrain ribbon. The price is $45. The same exuberantly colored paper covers a three-by-twelve-by-ten-inch box, which is meant to hold manila folders that are too frequently consulted to be filed away in a drawer. The box is $85. A balsa-wood letter opener, priced at $22.50, has a handle covered with the same paper.

Cashmeres Etc, at 854 Madison Avenue (70th), has some luxurious cashmere mufflers by the Italian company Loro Piana, which have been printed on one side with autumn foliage and berries in shades of claret, cypress, and fawn. The other side is in a solid complementary color. The scarves measure seventy-four inches by sixteen inches, and the price is $395. Crocheted cashmere gloves that really hold up, according to the shop, cost $155 a pair, and are available in mulberry and ivory. Cashmere cowls that can be drawn up to cover the head on blustery days are $95, in any of a dozen shades, including grape, terracotta, and ancient green. Toasty cashmere socks, for men, come in gray, navy, camel, or black, at $50. The store also has a bouquet of supple tunic-length silk-and-cashmere jerseys for women. These are cut like long-sleeved T-shirts, with a choice of three necklines: crew, mock turtle, and turtle. The knit is an all-over design of slender vertical cables, and the colors are those of pastel crayons—celery, rose, and lavender, among lots of others, at $425 to $450. Tartan cashmere mufflers, which would look right on just about anyone, are $125.

Across Central Park, Avventura, at 463 Amsterdam Avenue (82nd), has some lovely, otherworldly scarves made in Venice of silk that has been intricately pleated, in the style associated with Mario Fortuny. They are a yard long, and the silks, which are as bright as oil paint squeezed out on a palette, mirror the light. The price is $95. Pieces of the same silk have been made up into elegant jewelry pouches, which close with a silk cord decorated with Murano glass beads; the pouches are $95 to $115, depending on their size. The same pleating technique has been applied to a black-cat-soft panne-velvet jewelry pouch, which would also work exceptionally well as an evening bag. The glass beads on its cord are also black, and they give the pouch a little shimmer. The price is $140. Avventura also stocks an unusual eighteen-inch-long necklace that consists of turquoise and emerald glass links

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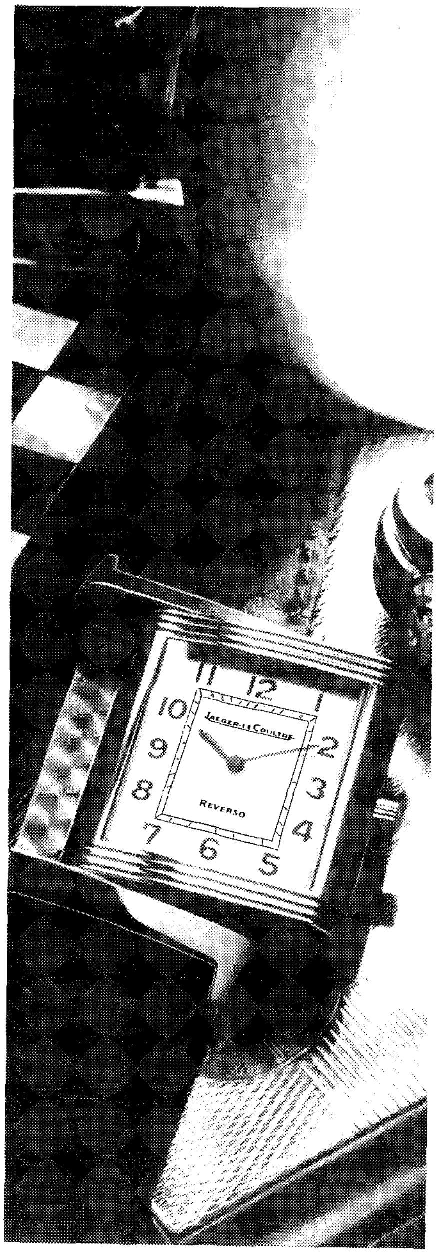

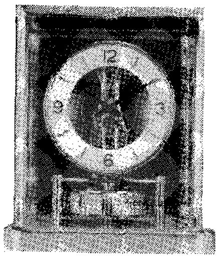

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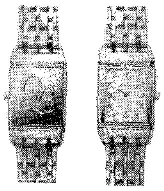

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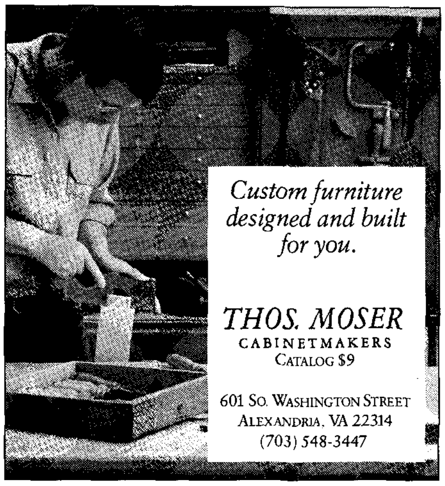
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touched here and there with gilt. The necklace's fragility is part of its charm: it seems intended for a present-day naiad. The price is $65. Here, too, is a picture frame of aqueous-colored Murano glass, laid on in an openwork pattern. The result is a frame that looks like a liquid trellis. It comes in three sizes: three inches by five, five by seven, and eight by ten. The prices are $50, $60, and $70, respectively. The frame is also available in foggy gray and violet glass, and it is made by a Venetian firm that combines traditional glassmaking methods with contemporary styles. Since Venice is the place where East meets West, Avventura will also supply, for $125, a set of sterling-silver chopsticks, to transform take-out repasts.

MEN and women who like to cook might also like two cookbooks that are new this Christmas. One is a revised edition of two classics. The other is a small treasure, and both are about the Italian kitchen. The first, "Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking," by Marcella Hazan (Knopf; $30), brings together in a single volume Hazan's famous manuals "The Classic Italian Cook Book" and "More Classic Italian Cooking," and proves the adage that a whole can be greater than the sum of its parts. In addition to alleviating the frustration of cooks who are always searching for a recipe in the wrong volume, the book, with new layout and typography, is easier to use. Almost every recipe has been slightly rewritten: fat content has been reduced, and seasonings are left more to the cook's discretion. Hazan has added a chapter on Italian phrases and ingredients, from battuto to salsa rossa; has expanded and consolidated her collection of pasta recipes; and has supplied a chart showing which sauces go with what pasta shape. The book will be of use to both beginners and aficionados, and more than ever deserves its place among the first ranks of cookbooks in English.

For those who have already run out and bought Hazan's book for themselves, there is "Florentines: A Tuscan Feast," by Lorenza de' Medici (Random House; $22.50). De' Medici is the chatelaine of Badia a Coltibuono, one of the best olive-oil-producing groves in Tuscany, where she runs a cooking school. But the raison d'être of this volume is the still-life paintings of Giovanna Garzoni, a seventeenth-century artist who was supported in her endeavors by de' Medici's ancestors. The author has chosen traditional Tuscan recipes to match the paintings; thus Garzoni's gentle picture "A Dish of Medlars and a Rose, with Almonds" is paired with a recipe for onion-and-almond soup. Each recipe is preceded by comments by the scholar-gardener Giacomo Castelvetro, who in 1614 wrote a book for the purpose of getting the English to eat more fruits and vegetables. One of his advisories informs us that almonds are "considered to be the noblest nut of all." Scattered throughout the text are reports from travellers to Italy, such as a comment by the English writer Fynes Moryson, who noted at the beginning of the seventeenth century that Italians "hold the table and bed unfit for conversation." The book is charming, and all the recipes beg to be tried at once. Both volumes are to be found at Shakespeare & Co., 2259 Broadway (81st), and Kitchen Arts & Letters, 1435 Lexington Avenue (93rd).

To move on from cookbooks but not from things Italian, a volume entitled "The Brancacci Chapel" is the product of a collaboration between Umberto Baldini and Ornella Casazza, the leaders of the chapel restoration project (Abrams; $125). It depicts the newly restored frescoes in the Florentine church of Santa Maria del Carmine, where Masaccio and Masolino spent the years from 1423 to 1428 painting the life of St. Peter. Filippino Lippi finished the work, sixty years later. Vasari, the great chronicler of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, wrote, "All the most celebrated sculptors and painters who worked and studied in that chapel became excellent and illustrious." The restoration, which was completed in 1991, managed to avoid the controversies that have beset similar projects. This book is unusual in managing to convey, by means of its full-page matte color plates (which are offset by black pages on the

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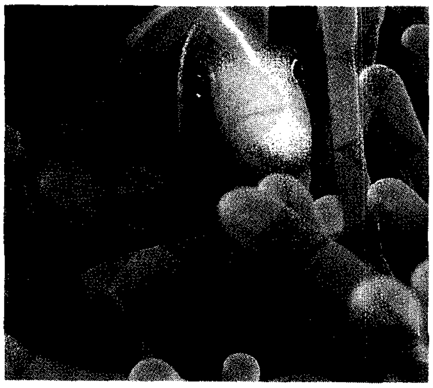

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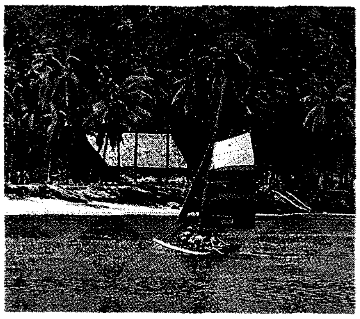

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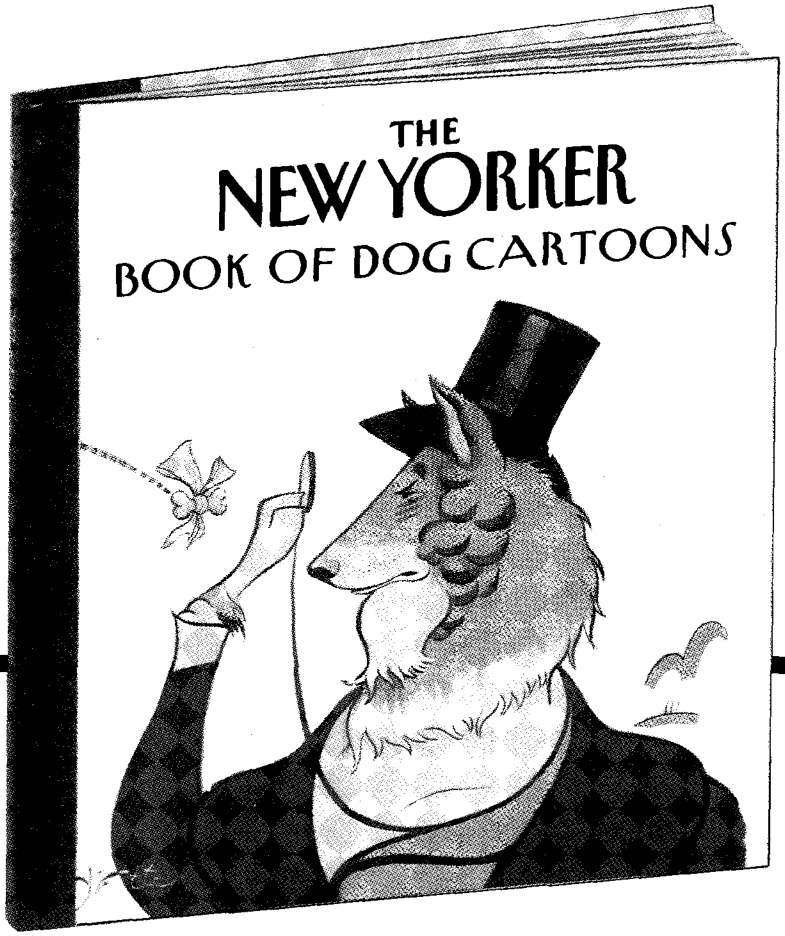

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verso), the power of the frescoes themselves. Many of the details, reproduced in their actual size, help to render a sense of intimacy. The text, by Baldini and Casazza, is authoritative.

"Shadows of Africa," written by Peter Matthiessen, with pictures by Mary Frank (Abrams; $34.95), is the product of a present-day collaboration. The text is made up of excerpts from Matthiessen's journals, in which he recorded, over a thirty-year period, his impressions of the rivers, plains, hills, deserts, and refuges of Africa. Frank's drawings and paintings of African wildlife form a bestiary that builds on the text rather than simply illustrates it. Some dark oil paintings and monoprints have a life of their own, for, while they depict real creatures—cheetahs, lions, and African elephants among them—they are visually akin to photographic negatives, which serves to remind the reader that the future is black for many of these animals, and that care must be taken to insure that they do not become simply legendary beasts to future generations. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of "Shadows of Africa" is being given to Wildlife Conservation International, an arm of the New York Zoological Society. Both "The Brancacci Chapel" and "Shadows of Africa" are available at Books & Co., 939 Madison Avenue (74th).

THE purpose of the New York Botanical Garden Shop, at 590 Madison Avenue (57th), in the I.B.M. atrium, is to support and promote the activities of the Garden, which is in the Bronx. Here, for indoor or outdoor gardeners, are two-gallon tin watering cans that have been hand-painted, in Athens, Georgia, with either sunflowers or pink zinnias, and sell for $49. A four-inch bisque cherub, to hang on the garden wall beside next spring's showing of love-in-a-mist, is $7, and bronze faucets, meant to embellish an ordinary garden-hose connection, take the form of three-inch ducks, quails, or rabbits, and cost $43 to $54. Seven-inch Italian terracotta pots that have been glazed aubergine, burnt sienna, or olive are $23. This store also stocks an attractive carryall made by the British firm Portmeirion. It is eighteen inches square and is printed with a picture of the *Helleborus niger*, or Christmas rose, attended by butterflies. The material is vinyl-coated cotton, which is waterproof, and the price is $20. For the same price, and from the same source, an apron with a leafy vertical wallpaper print can be ordered. Rakish silk chrysanthemums, to pin on a hat or a lapel, can be had in gold, oak brown, or crimson, for $8. They might be put in a stocking, as might a few packets of Shepherd's Garden Seeds, which have been selected for this spring's planting. The seed packets, which are $2, include semi-dwarf delphinium, planet carrots, Legion of Honor poppy, and lunaria, which is also called money plant, because when its seedpods dry they look like silver coins.

The inventory of the New York Bound Bookshop, at 50 Rockefeller Plaza (Fifth Avenue at 51st), in the old Associated Press Building, includes a number of choices for those whose love of the city is informed by an interest in its marginally less hectic past. Both old and new books about almost every aspect of the five boroughs are on sale here, as are a boxful of wonderful old postcards that have been mounted and turned into note cards, for $2.50 each. They include views of the old Penn Station, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument, the Stock Exchange, the Woolworth Building, and the Menagerie in Central Park. Any one of them could either be sent or framed. And for someone who has a larger view in mind, here are some original Currier & Ives lithographs: one shows the Hudson River as seen from Ruggles House in Newburgh, and the other the face of Manhattan's 1875 main post office, on lower Broadway. The prints are $800 each.

There are legions of New Yorkers who, on trips to other cities, tirelessly visit every notable sight, guidebook in hand, but rarely venture out of their own connect-the-dots puzzle of New York: from home to work, on to local haunts, and home again. To encourage outings farther afield, and to provide new information about familiar places, one might give a friend the Blue Guide to New York, by Carol von Pressentin Wright (Norton; $19.95). It contains all the details, maps, and plans that distinguish the Blue Guide series devoted to European cities and countries, and the series' usual high level of writing and scholarship is maintained throughout. The whole is chock-full of lore. One learns,

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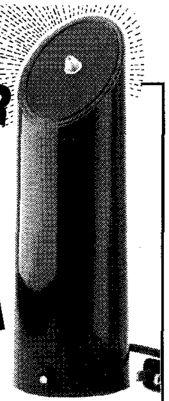

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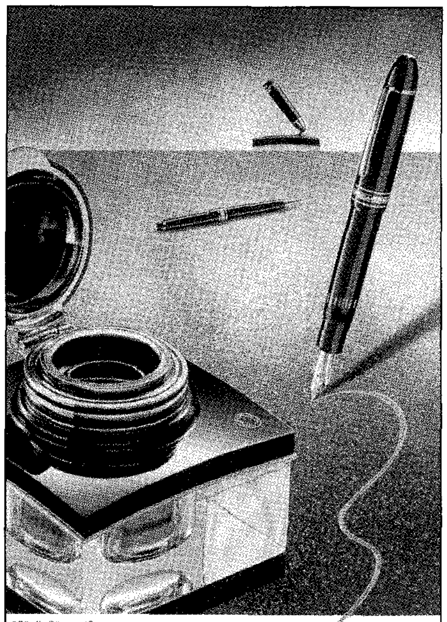
for example, that Throgs Neck recalls a John Throckmorton, an Anabaptist minister who arrived here with a band of followers in 1643; that the subway kiosk at 72nd Street and Broadway was built in 1904 and is—as one should have noticed—a neo-Dutch Colonial structure, meant to celebrate the founding of the city by the Dutch; and that the statue at the center of the Bethesda Fountain, "The Angel of the Waters," was made by a woman, Emma Stebbins, in 1868, and was one of the few statues specially commissioned for Central Park. A map of the Park is also included, which might be welcomed by anyone who has spent too many Sundays trying to find the carrousel.

AMONG the curios for sale at Primal Art Source, 50 Greenwich Avenue (Charles), are some remarkable antique dolls, including a collection of Japanese ancestral dolls typical of the Meiji period, which were taken out only on ceremonial occasions. The dolls are from six to twelve inches high (they are all sitting down, as at a tea ceremony) and are made, with exquisite care, of silk and papier-mâché. Each kimono is more beautiful than the next, and the dolls' faces, which are painted eggshells, are serene. The dolls range in price from $150 to $400. Here, too, are wooden slingshot dolls carved by the Baule tribe, on the Ivory Coast. The dolls, whose legs hold the slings, are between four and ten inches long, and are priced from $30 to $100. Elegant Balinese puppets, whose heads are manipulated by long sticks hidden under their skirts, have striking, masklike faces, and arms and hands—moved by other sticks—that can be supremely expressive; $45 to $50. Primal Art also has a trove of Venetian glass beads that were exported to Africa at the beginning of this century; eighteen-inch lengths of blue beads are a modest $10, and would fit into the heel of a stocking. Heavy Venetian-glass necklaces from Nigeria are strung with tear-shaped lozenges the colors of mangoes, lemons, and the sea. They are $65 each.

"THEY sound really wonderful, but you mainly get to hear them when they fall down," says Ed Fuqua, the assistant manager of the handsome, airy shop in the Guggenheim Museum



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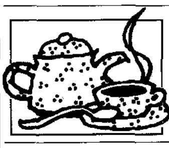

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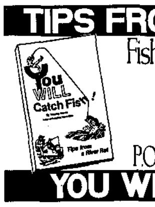

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SoHo, at 575 Broadway (Prince). He's talking about the wooden blocks—for grownups—from the Bower Studio, in Vergennes, Vermont. The blocks are made of maple, and one set can be used to build an eighteen-inch-long scale model of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House. The set is $70, and illustrated instructions are included. For a member of Mr. Blandings' family, sets of Greek, Roman, and postmodern blocks are available, as is a set of "Mini-Classic" blocks, for improving hand-eye coördination. These blocks range in price from $40 to $270 a set.

People who find it heartening to know in advance how something is going to turn out might prefer a jigsaw puzzle. The shop has several on hand. They run from a hundred to two hundred pieces each, and measure either eleven inches by fifteen or thirteen inches by fourteen and a half. The pictures that have been cut up so they can be put back together include "Red Cross Train," by Gino Severini; "The Great Parade," by Fernand Léger; and "Paris Through the Window," by Marc Chagall; $12. To some of us who spent our childhood in New York City, the Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue at 88th Street was less an architectural marvel than a fantasy playground where dreams like "What if we could go sledding inside?" were born. To mark those fantasies, one might buy, instead of Rosebud, a snow globe with the Guggenheim inside. The price is $12.

A YEAR ago, Giorgio Armani opened a number of new shops in this country called A/X Armani Exchange, which seem to be about as far as the Maestro is prepared to go in the direction of the Gap. The SoHo A/X, at 568 Broadway (Prince), across the street from the Guggenheim shop, is a spaghetti-Western version of an Army-Navy store, stocked with clothes for people who dress down on purpose to look casual. The shirts, which bear on their labels the address "Via Durini, Milano," are for men and women. Long-sleeved velour polo shirts with cotton-knit collars, waistbands, and cuffs cost $110, in caffè latte, melanzana, and three shades of gray. A perfectly weathered denim shirt, at $95, has bone buttons and two pleated breast pockets with scalloped flaps. Hardy Boys wool-and-

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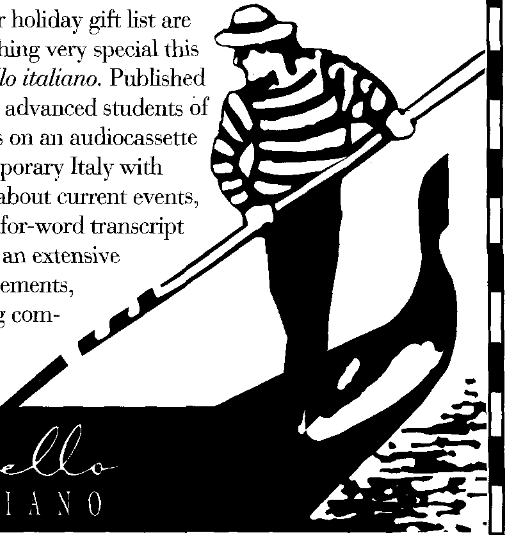

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cotton shirts, but more sophisticated—such as a Tuscan-green-and-wine plaid, with a windowpane overlay in bright blue—are the same price, and so are corduroy shirts with infinitely narrow wales. These have slightly gathered shoulders and traditional flap pockets, and the colors include cream, butterscotch, and cobalt. Indigo waffle-weave sports socks are $14 a pair.

Agnès B., at 116-118 Prince Street (Greene), continues to be a good source of clothing both for people who still stay out all night and for those who don't anymore. Starting from the inside out: pale-gray, white, or pink cotton camisoles with crocheted edging are $50; long-sleeved black, gray, or cream T-shirts, in the same cotton and with similar edging, are $66. Gold lamé bustiers are $98. An unexpectedly pretty silk shell that has been tie-dyed fuchsia and nectarine is $135. Katharine Hepburn open-necked white silk shirts with two flap pockets are $180, and cropped black leather jackets with front zippers and two diagonal zip pockets are $895. For men, the same jacket, cut bigger, is $1,116, and chauffeurs' black leather caps are $105. Tie-silk patterns have been printed on cotton, and the cotton has been made up into boxer shorts, for $56 a pair. Comfortable cotton-fleece snap cardigans, in olive, coffee, and navy blue, are $88. Here, too, are some heavy ribbed wool sweaters that would very likely be worn again and again for years. The sweaters have crew necks and can be had in gray, navy, or black, for $195. Agnès B. is also selling, for $10, heart-shaped metal pins to benefit Meals-on-Wheels.

THOSE in search of more sweaters can find them uptown at Granny-Made, 381 Amsterdam Avenue (78th). Several years ago, the British designer Vanessa Keegan moved to Bolivia and began to establish women's coöperative enterprises in rural villages. Some of the products of that endeavor are on sale here, among them a dove-gray cable cardigan and a chain-link-and-seed-stitch black weskit cardigan. A number of the sweaters have intarsia Argyle patterns, and they are priced from $150 to $200. All have been made of alpaca by deft hands. Granny-Made's own hand-loomed chenille pullovers are $185. The color choice is black, raisin, or teal, and the chenille is heavy and lush. As is the store's custom, a number of elaborate sweaters are also in stock. A hand-loomed pullover from Susan Bristol takes a typical abstract Fair Isle pattern on a cream ground and turns it into a multicolor picture of a cottage garden, complete with picket fence, distant orchard, and embroidered chenille bumblebees; $130. A brown cardigan hand-knit by Jane Wheeler is cut like a hacking jacket. There are four beflowered urns knit into the jacket, two on each side. The price is $650.

Here, too, is a swing coat, shaped like an upside-down funnel, by Muir & Osborne. The hand-knit coat, which has a standup collar, is red with bands of violet stars, and is bordered at the bottom with patterns of hoarfrost and autumn vegetables. It's $655. To wear under a sweater, long-sleeved cotton T-shirts by Ellen McCall have been silk-screened either with grapevines or with birds and burnished garlands of leaves. They're $50, in yellow or cream. Granny-Made's own cable cardigans for men, in oatmeal, heather, or black, are based on a pattern used by the late Bert Levy, who was the grandmother of Michael Rosenberg, the shop's owner.

Nautica, at 216 Columbus Avenue (70th), specializes in gear for the outdoors. Plush zippered sweatshirts with hoods have a flap that snaps shut over the zipper. The sweatshirt has full-cut dolman sleeves and two slash pockets. The color choice is grape, gray, or ladybug red, with a contrasting color on the placket—green, taxicab yellow, or navy, respectively. The price is $125. Nautica has recently developed a new fabric for rainwear, Nautex. It feels like nylon, but it has a polymer coating that draws moisture away from the body to the outside of the fabric. A hip-length Nautex shell with two zippered pockets and a white mesh lining has a sturdy, no-nonsense look. In fire-engine red, white, slicker yellow, or navy blue, it's $240. The same jacket in three-quarter length and insulated with a polyfil lining is $340. The smaller sizes of all the above should fit most women. And for men, here is a calf-length navy loden-cloth duffel coat with horn toggles. The coat is hooded, and is lined with Black Watch plaid; $370. Wool baseball caps in burgundy, navy, or pine green, with

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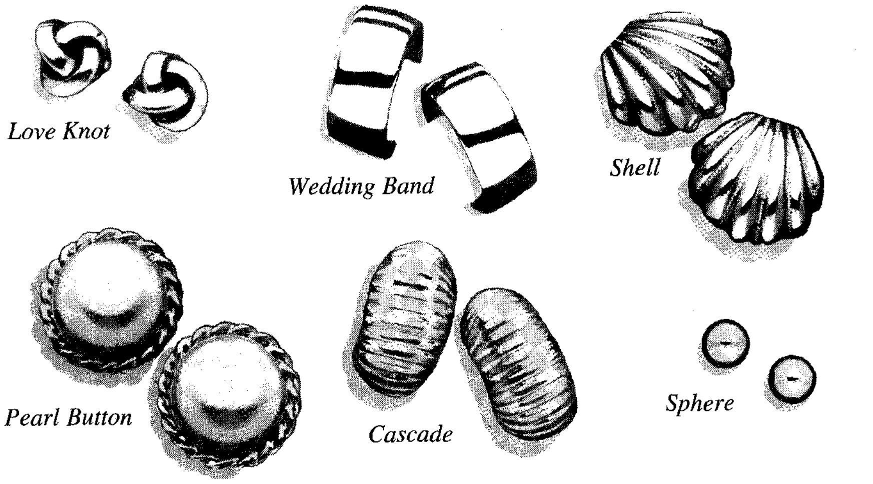

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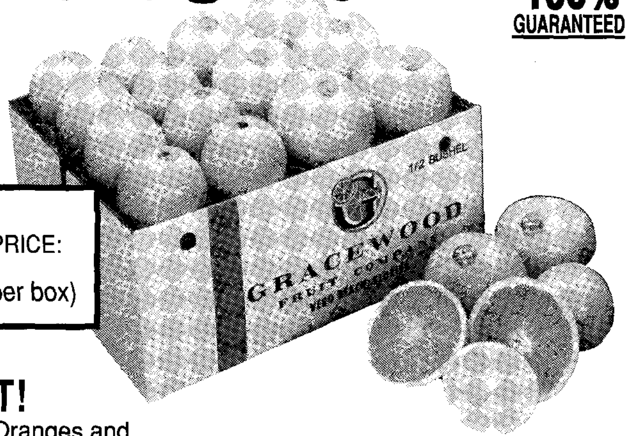

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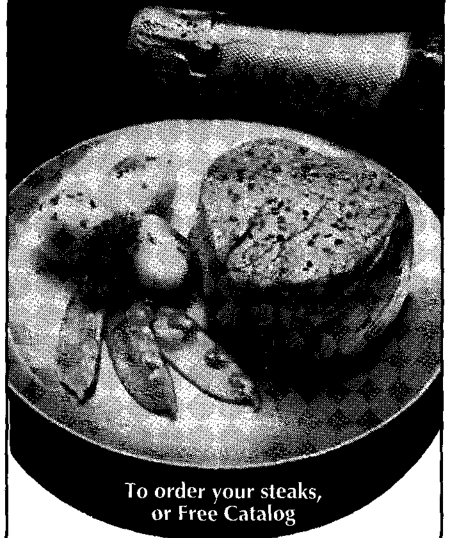

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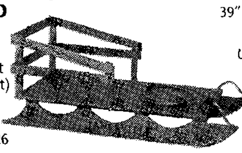


brown suède bills and contrasting beanie buttons, are $30.

Made-to-order dressing gowns are the stock-in-trade of Leron, at 750 Madison Avenue (65th), but the shop does have some ready-to-wear robes for Christmas. These include an ankle-length, Sherlock Holmes-style fir-green velvet wrapper for women, trimmed with green silk piping and with white quilted satin collar and cuffs. The robe has two side-seam pockets and a wrap belt, and would look fine under the mistletoe. The price is $895. Women's red silk man-tailored pajamas have notched collars and elastic waists; they range in price from $295 to $495, depending on the quality of the silk. Matching ruby-red scuff slippers are $75. Leron has a following for its full-length terry-cloth robe in pink, blue, yellow, or white, which is embroidered on the lapel with an initial or emblem of your choice; pansies, violets, and daisies are popular. The robe is piped either in white or to match the embroidery; $295. For men, the shop can oblige with robes in magnificently heavy white terry cloth. The price is $350, and, according to Carolina Donadio, the store manager, they last about nine thousand years.

DO-IT-YOURSELFERS whose interests include quilting might be glad of a gift from Quilters Passion, 531 Amsterdam Avenue (86th). The store sells hundreds of different cotton fabrics from a variety of sources. The bolts are arranged by color around the store, and the patterns include calicos, repeating flowers, birds, fish, fruit, pinecones, and chili peppers. Most of the fabric is forty-five inches wide, and it ranges in price from $3.98 to $10.98 a yard. All the appropriate quilters' tools are here, such as a Clear View Triangle, designed by Sara Nephew, through which one can see the shapes being cut ($6.50), and a newfangled nine-degree Circle Wedge Ruler, by Cutting Edge Quilt Designs, for use in circular quilts, such as the Dresden Plate ($18.95). Also available here are a number of template assortments from the Classic Quilt Series put out by a company called Come Quilt with Me; these are $15.95 a package, and include instructions for making Texas Star, Ferris Wheel, and Drunkard's Path quilts. For the anxious, "Jinny Beyer's Color Confidence for Quilters" (Quilt Digest Press; $24.95) demonstrates how to shade a toffee-brown patch and a Wedgwood-blue one together by means of intermediate-colored patches. The store also offers quilting classes.

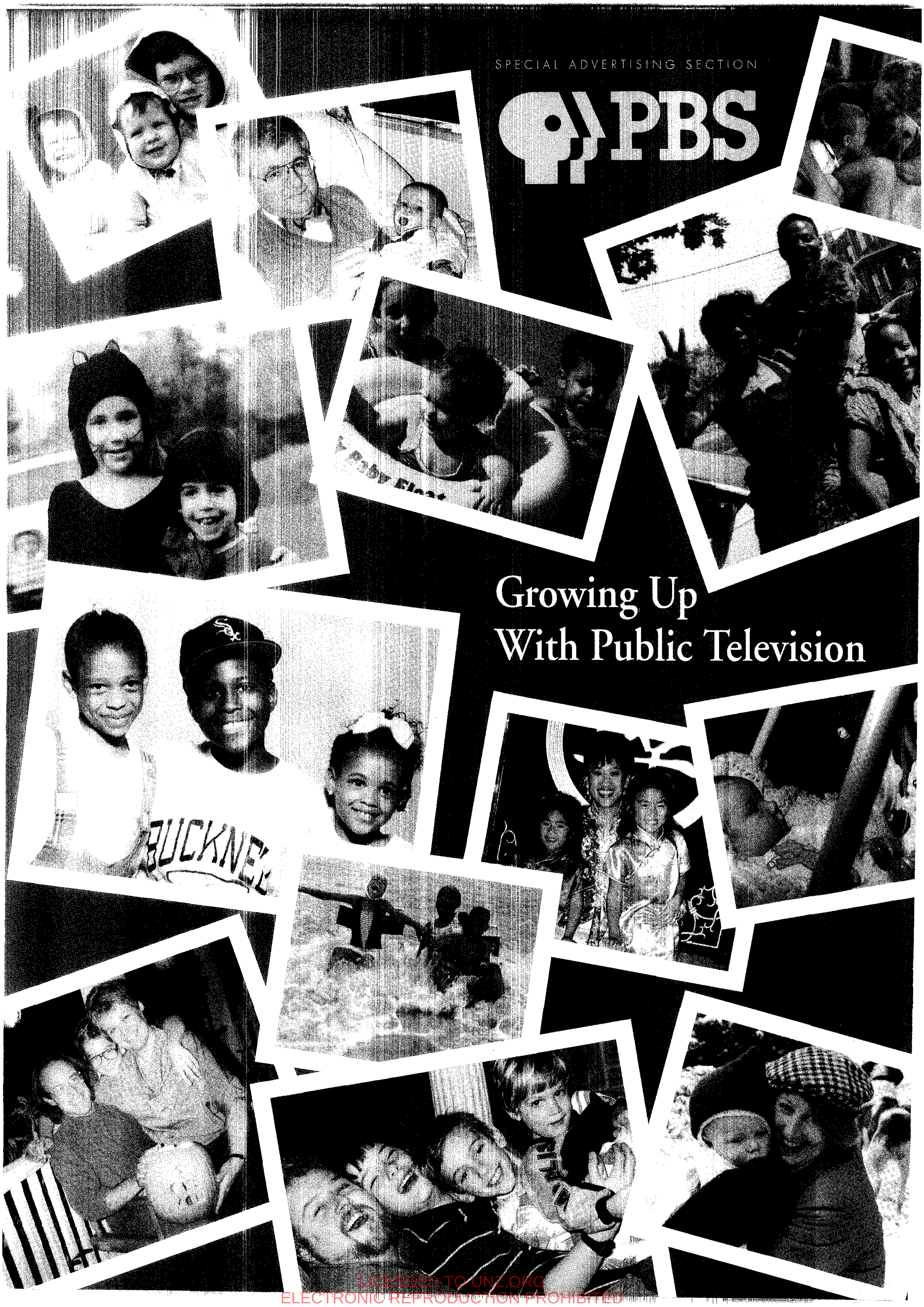
Trouvaille Française, which is open by appointment (212-737-6015), is the domain of Muriel Clarke, who collects French—and occasionally American, English, and Dutch—linen and *habillements*. To wear under the covers, here is a hope chest's worth of long-sleeved white cotton Victorian nightgowns, some lined with flannel, embellished, variously, with linen tatting, ribbons, bobbin lace, Hamburg embroidery, and Swiss openwork embroidery. The nightgowns range in price from $70 to $125. Combing jackets, which ladies wore while they were dressing their hair, are similarly trimmed. These start at $45, and many of them would make nice short jackets. Trouvaille Française also has several different examples of a traditional jacket made of heavy black cotton cloth by natives of Vollendam, an island off the coast of Holland. The cloth is printed, calico style, with white pin dots, stripes, and flowers. The jackets are cropped, and have intricate patterns of smocking on the bodice, arms, and waist. All the work is done by hand. The jackets look as if they might have influenced Rei Kawakubo, and they cost $100. *Chemises des grandpères*, made of cotton twill, have button front plackets. They may be worn as nightshirts by either men or women, and a number of them are tidily embroidered with the initials of the original nineteenth-century wearer. Finally, here in Clarke's varied and always pleasing stock are some vintage Brooke Cadwallader scarves. These date from the nineteen-forties, and one of them features a central design of praying mantises inside a border of yellow stars; $45.

THE CHILDREN'S CLOSET

IN its stock of vintage and antique clothes for children, Trouvaille Française has a cache of chemisettes, for tiny babies. These are white cotton jackets with the merest hint of lace at the neck and cuffs, and a ribbon to tie closed. They were made in France at the turn of the century, and their utter simplicity would [*Continued on page 101*]

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

PBS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Appraisals from experts are always enlightening. On the Diamante, they have been overwhelmingly glowing.

Motor Trend reported that "the Diamante's sharply defined performance enables a driver to feel eminently in control." Meanwhile, the interior design ensures that "driver and passengers are utterly pampered."

The Diamante is "a well-bred automobile," according to *Car and Driver.* "The ride is controlled, yet magic-carpet silky...the leather interior is a knockout...whisper-quiet."

And after road-testing the Diamante LS, with its 202-horsepower V6 engine, ABS brakes, exclusive TCL™ traction control,* driver-side air bag and numerous luxury amenities, *Road & Track* simply said, "We are mightily impressed."

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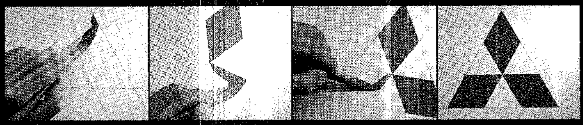

The name Mitsubishi means three diamonds, and has signified automotive excellence for 75 years.

*Optional equipment. Model shown Diamante LS.

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Left: As part of its effort to teach children about the world, "Sesame Street" focused on Latin American traditions. Right: Mister Rogers prepares kids for school

The sounds of children trying to be quiet fill the air at Books and Blocks, Kelly Chapman's daycare center on the outskirts of Nixa, Missouri. Chapman, a self-assured young woman with a degree in elementary education, has just finished showing a visitor around the center when a child who will soon graduate to kindergarten walks by.

Chapman asks the little girl if she knows her ABCs.

"Of course I know the ABCs. I'm four years old!" the child answers.

"So are you ready for kindergarten?" Chapman asks the child.

"Well, I *think* I'm ready," the girl replies. "I'm a little nervous, but I saw on *Mister Rogers* that lots of kids are nervous about school, so I'm not too worried."

Chapman looks up at the visitor and smiles as the child rejoins her group.

"There," she says. "That's why we use *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and *Sesame Street.*"

Sending children off to school ready to learn, with the skills and maturity they will need to succeed in the world, is one of the greatest virtues of these two programs — the longest-running, best-known, and most-loved children's shows on public television.

But in this case, Chapman is talking about more than just the programs; she's referring to two national public broadcasting projects — the *Sesame Street* Pre-School Education Project and Extending *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to Child Care — that help kids in daycare make productive use of the shows' lessons. And the twenty-odd children she presently cares for are just a handful of the tens of thousands of America's preschoolers in inner city, suburban, and rural daycare programs who are benefitting from these efforts.

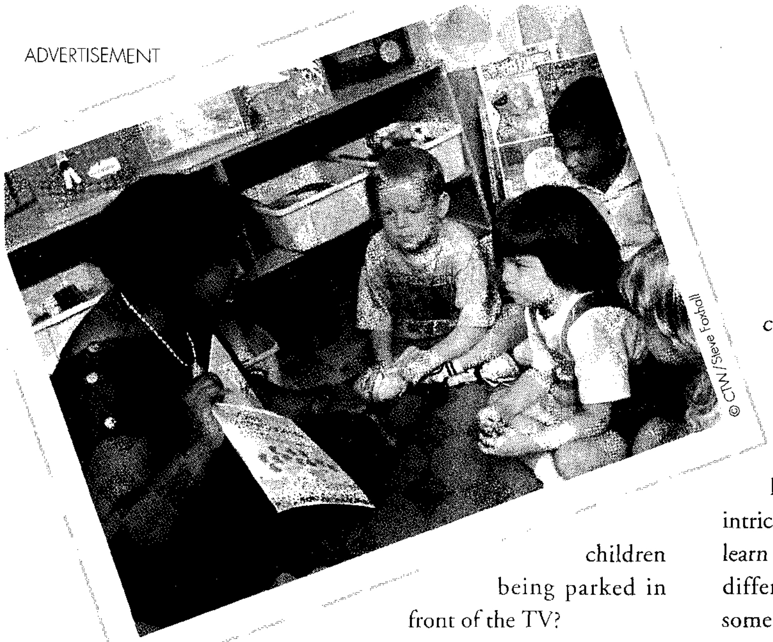
Like the majority of participating daycare providers, Chapman began her association with the projects by attending a training workshop, in her case at the public television station KOZK in nearby Springfield, Missouri.

"I was impressed by the training," Chapman recalls. "They stressed that we should use the TV shows as a starting point and expand on the topics they cover, either during the program or after it's over. The key is to use television actively.

"That's certainly what we do here. We read books, sing songs, make things. Sometimes we'll talk about behavior, like sharing and coöperating. We've developed a lot of the follow-up ourselves, but I also received guides for both programs that are full of ideas for learning activities."

But wasn't she just a *little* concerned about how parents would react to their

> ***Sending children off to school ready to learn, with skills and maturity, is one of the greatest virtues of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" and "Sesame Street."***



© CTW / Steve Foxhall

children being parked in front of the TV?

"Our parents know we're using television as a teaching tool, not a babysitter," says Chapman. "And these programs are simply great teaching tools, particularly when you use them actively."

As if on cue, Barbara Eli arrives to pick up two-year-old Chelsea.

"Chelsea knows a lot of the songs and all the characters," Eli says about Chelsea and her favorite show, *Sesame Street.* "It's amazing how quickly she catches on. And I like the education she gets from it. She can say most of the ABCs, she can count to fifteen — except for nine — and she's learned most of her colors."

> ***Children's programs on public television are valued by American families because each series sets out to teach children something about the world.***

Kathy Garton, picking up her three-and-a-half-year-old son Chance, joins in with her own observations. "I really restrict his TV; PBS is about the only thing I let him watch."

Why public TV?

"It's not just wasting his time," she says quickly. "It's teaching him something. It's helping him grow."

"A SENSE OF MISSION"

You may be surprised to learn that television is working so productively in America's child care centers, but you shouldn't be at all surprised that public television is behind it.

In the twenty-five years since *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* started airing nationally, public television and its outstanding children's programs — *Sesame Street, Reading Rainbow, Long Ago & Far Away;* newcomers like *Shining Time Station, Barney & Friends,* and *Lamb Chop's Play-Along* — have helped millions of children master the intricacies of the alphabet and of counting, learn to respect people who may look or act different than they do, and explore the sometimes frightening mysteries of their own feelings.

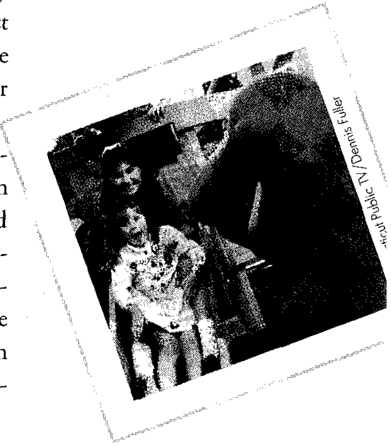
Along the way, these shows have established a definitive standard of excellence in children's television. They've also helped define the spirit of public broadcasting itself, a spirit that places the needs and sensibilities of the audience — in this case, children — above all other considerations.

You can see the evidence every day on public television, in the deliberate, child-centered world of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood;* in the instructive parables among steam engines on *Shining Time Station;* and in the wonderfully energetic simplicity of *Barney & Friends.*

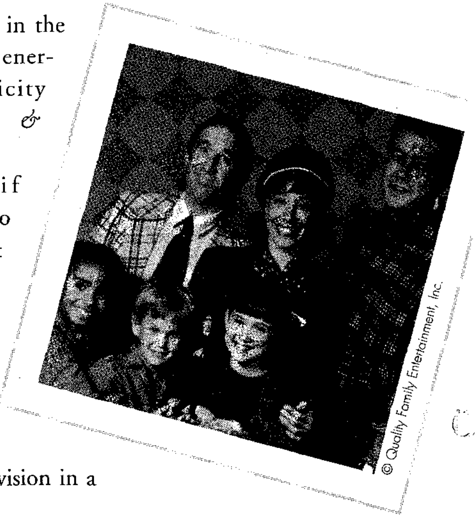
And if you'd like to see that spirit at work, meet Cecily Truett, executive producer at Lancit Media Productions. Lancit and public station KCET in Los Angeles have just begun development work on *The Puzzle Factory,* a series that will air on public television in a few years.

"The most exciting thing about this series is its objective," says Truett. "Our goal is to help children get along in an ethnically diverse society, to help them avoid learning racial and ethnic prejudice, to try to teach kids how to be good human beings."

Truett has just captured one of the most important reasons that children's programs



ut Public TV/Dennis Fuller



© Quality Family Entertainment, Inc.

Clockwise from left: Storybook readings are part of the "Sesame Street" PEP Initiative; "Barney & Friends" stars a dinosaur; the "Shining Time Station" cast.

Looking again at Little Big Horn.

George Custer was so promising a young officer in the Union Army that he was made Brigadier General at 23. He was extravagantly brave, a genius at tactics, and a blazing hero to his Cavalry troops. But on June 25, 1876, Custer's illustrious career came to an awful end when he and all his men were massacred at The Battle of Little Big Horn – Custer's Last Stand. The battle has become one of the most frequently depicted moments in American history. And it has been one of the least understood. No whites survived the massacre but two very different accounts did. In *Last Stand at Little Big Horn*, this horrific moment in history is seen from the view of the Sioux, Cheyenne and Crow and from the perspective of white settlers who wanted their lands.

Watch *Last Stand at Little Big Horn* on *The American Experience*, hosted by David McCullough.

The American Experience

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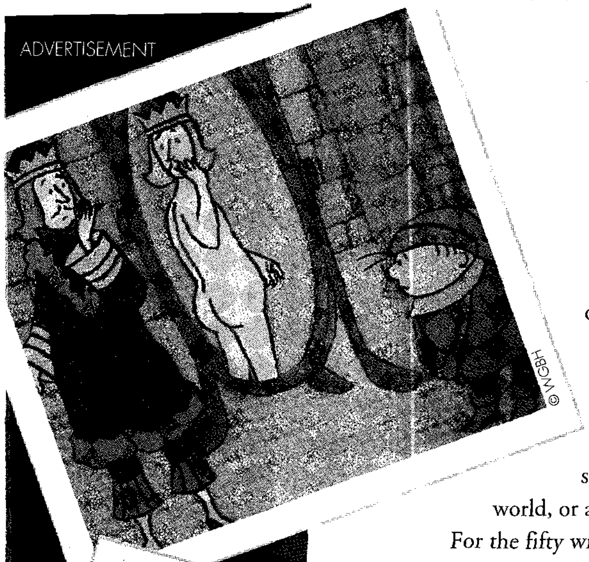
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Clockwise from above: The production team for "Ghostwriter"; the fairy tale "The Emperor's New Clothes" on "Long Ago & Far Away"; kids solve mysteries on "Ghostwriter."

on public television are so valued by American families: each of the series sets out to teach children something about the world, or about themselves.

For the fifty writers, directors, and other creators of *The Puzzle Factory,* the challenge of teaching children something important dictated that their production process begin not with a Hollywood-style creative session, but with a college-style workshop. The production team will rely on expert advisors, such as those assembled for the teach-in, throughout the production of the series.

"All we have to do," says Ricki Franklin, the series' executive producer, "is take their input and add the creative spark that will make our program fresh, delightful, and exciting for children."

Truett nods in agreement. "Creating children's television for public broadcasting is an amazing process," she says. "It's time-consuming — our program won't be on the air for at least another two years — but there's a real passion, an excitement, a sense of mission about this work that is building every day.

"We all want to create something *important* for children."

"I CAN DO THAT"

Take a few minutes to watch *Ghostwriter,* an ambitious series from Children's Television Workshop that premiered on public television last month with the goal of promoting reading and writing to children ages seven to ten.

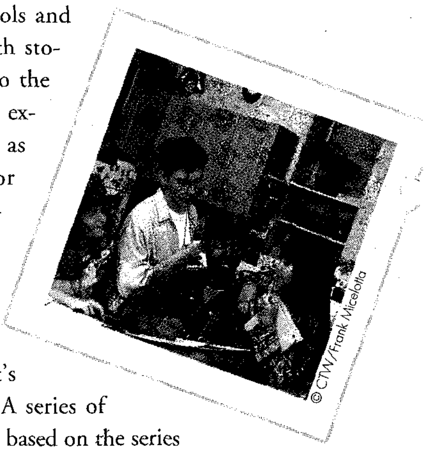
What you'll see is not an academic exercise that preaches to children, but an exciting, eminently watchable adventure series that features a group of engaging kids who solve mysteries. Their secret ally is a mysterious, invisible character — Ghostwriter — who can only communicate through reading and writing. Ghostwriter's messages can appear anywhere — from a frisbee to a refrigerator — and force the program's characters, and its viewers, to read.

This seamless integration of a program's educational objectives with its basic structure, plot, and characters is another hallmark of children's programming on public television, the result of both careful research and inspired creativity.

"We discovered that many kids didn't see any immediate reward in reading," says Rita Weisskoff, director of content for the project, "so we developed the idea of creating a world where kids use reading and writing for their *own* ends; that's how we came to the basic idea of depicting a team of kids using literacy skills to solve mysteries, to get themselves out of difficult or challenging situations.

"But we wanted to do more than motivate kids, although that's very important. We also wanted to give them some practical tools to improve their literacy skills. To do that, we needed to put print on the screen. And we knew the print had to be *part* of the story; if it was a separate little educational module, we felt kids would just turn it off. The Ghostwriter character was the creative breakthrough that made it all work."

But there is far more to *Ghostwriter* than the television program. The program, in fact, is only the centerpiece of an ambitious multi-media effort to lure kids back to the printed page.


© CTW/Frank Micelotta

"We're distributing twenty million copies of a full-color monthly mini-magazine to schools and afterschool centers, with stories and clues tagged to the month's TV programs," explains Tina Peel, who as overall project director has supervised the development and integration of the entire project. "We've also developed a newspaper feature that's appearing nationally. A series of twelve paperback books based on the series is being published separately.

"To reach more kids, we're working directly with the Boys and Girls Clubs of

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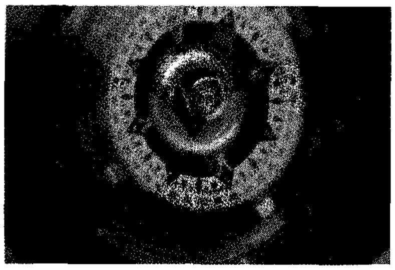

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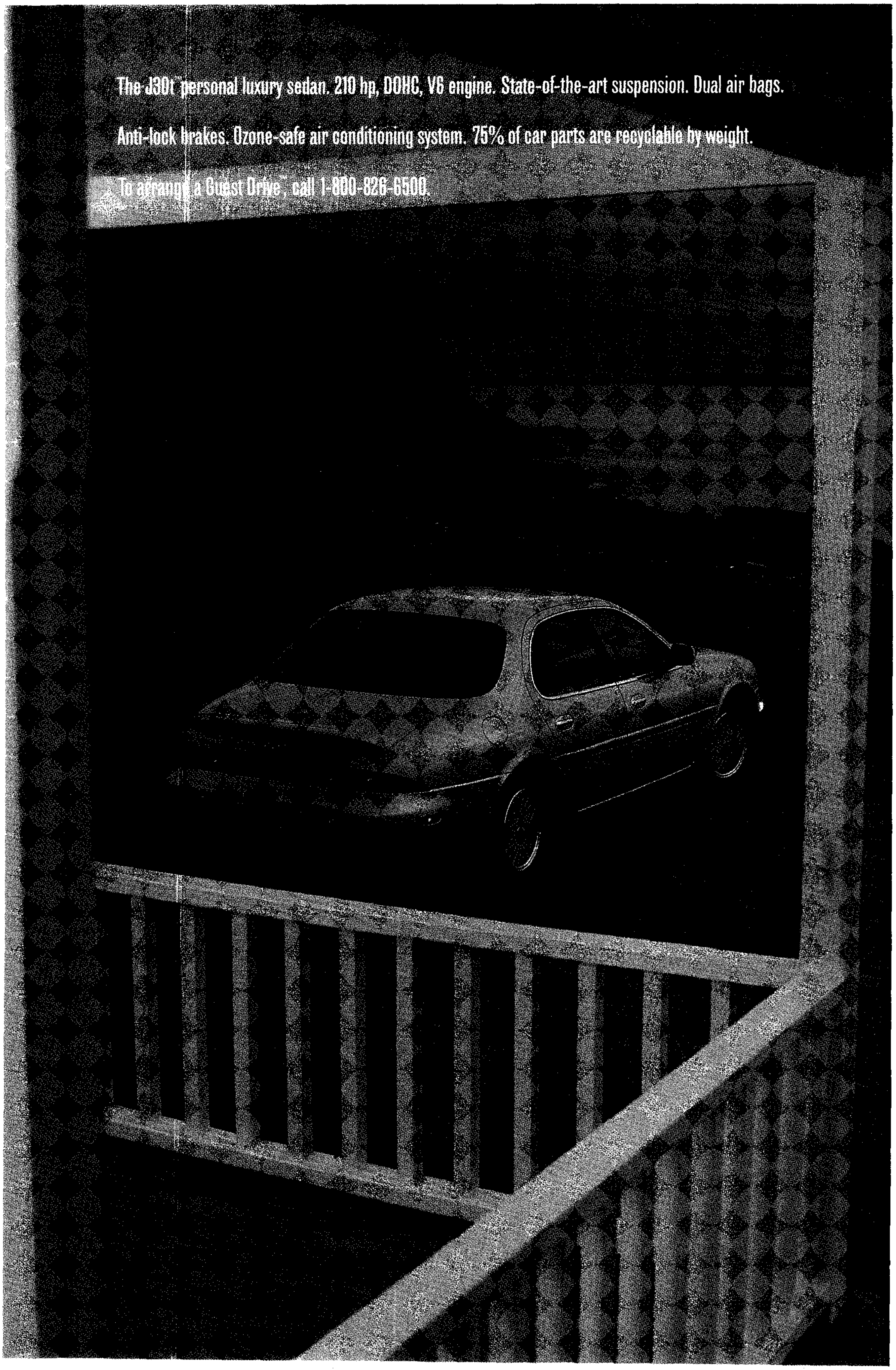

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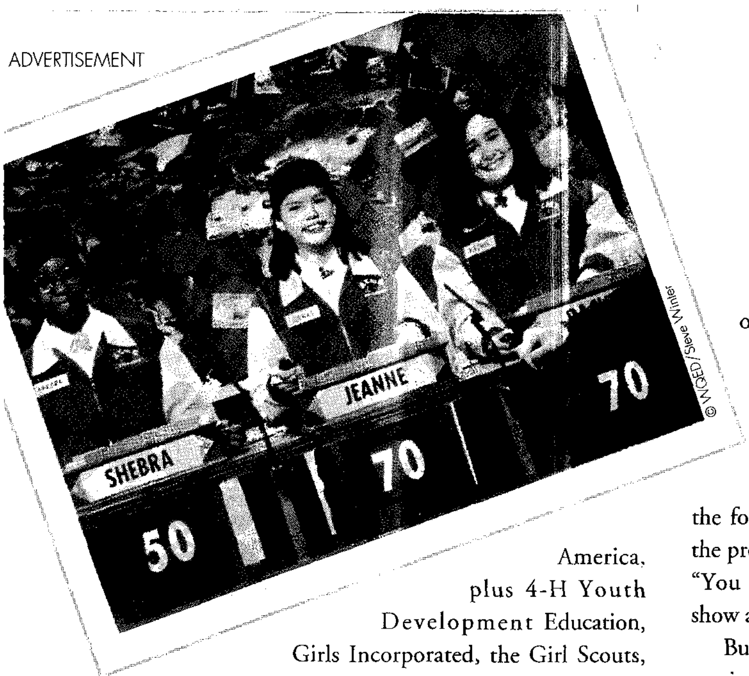


© WQED/Steve Winter

America, plus 4-H Youth Development Education, Girls Incorporated, the Girl Scouts, the YMCA, and other groups that provide care for kids after school.

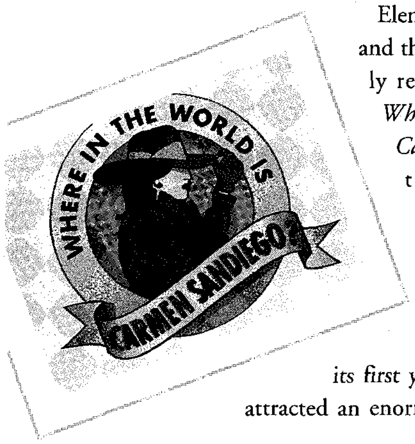
"We want to reach every kid we can with this project," Peel continues. "We want to show them how exciting this world of reading and writing is, so they'll look at it and say 'I want to do that.'

"Then we want to give them the skills and the confidence to say 'I *can* do that.'"

"YOU KNOW YOU'RE HAVING AN EFFECT"

The scene is a gathering of ninety-five geography teachers at the Washington, D.C. headquarters of the National Geographic Society. They're participating in a summer development institute, sharpening their teaching skills and brushing up on their knowledge of a world whose maps stubbornly refuse to stay still.

While it's a friendly group, the tone is understandably august — until one of the featured speakers abruptly announces that Ellis Island has been stolen and asks the teachers to help retrieve it. To do so, they must track the thief around the world aided by geographic clues.


WHERE IN THE WORLD IS
CARMEN SANDIEGO?

Elementary school students and their parents will instantly recognize the format of *Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?*, public television's popular fast-paced game show, produced by WGBH, in Boston, and WQED, in Pittsburgh. Last year, its first year on the air, *Carmen* attracted an enormous following among older elementary school students and has become quite a hit with teachers as well.

It wasn't always so. "Initially, a lot of teachers seemed to be a little put off by the format," says Kate Taylor, one of the program's co-executive producers. "You don't really think of a game show as being educational."

But the series' goal, Taylor explains, is to motivate kids' interest in geography while providing solid content. Creating a program that kids would love to watch was vital to its success — an approach teachers quickly came to appreciate.

"Suddenly all these kids were coming to school *excited* about geography," Taylor continues, "and teachers really responded. We were deluged with requests for information on how to use the series in the classroom."

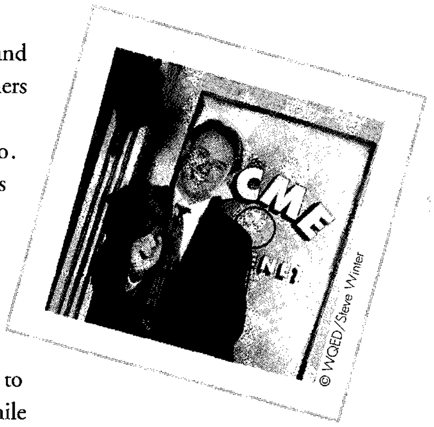
Creating a television program that kids would love to watch was vital to the success of "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?".

This year, the producers have responded with a teachers guide, and with outreach activities. But they've been just as creative in reaching out to kids.

"We've made an effort to find kids where *they* are," says Taylor. "We've taken the host of the program, Greg Lee, to shopping malls where he enacts a live version of the TV show, and we've been mobbed!

"We've also encouraged public stations to create their own *Carmen* events, and the response has been tremendous. In Akron, the contest winners were supposed to join Greg Lee for one of our live mall shows, but there was a blizzard. Well, 4,000 kids plowed through the snow just to see the event — they even brought atlases for Greg to autograph!

"Now when you have kids lining up to get *atlases* autographed," Taylor concludes, "you know you're having an effect on the way they think about geography."



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Clockwise from lower left: The logo for "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?"; some contestants; and the show's host, Greg Lee.

AMERICAN
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Viewers' Profiles:

Kevin Kline

"Playhouse reminds me consistently of how much TV can do. Their programming happily ignores the status quo of the medium and brings out first-rate work from the artists it challenges."

Bernadette Peters

"It's a chance to see film and theater from artists you may not yet know— or to see people you do know doing the kind of work they can't do anywhere else. It keeps TV at the cutting edge."

Vladimir Feltsman

"It's wonderful that Playhouse gives us—especially our young audiences— the chance to see work that both entertains and excites. We don't have to turn off our minds when we turn on PBS."

For viewers in tune with television's potential, Chubb is proud to help bring the vision of American Playhouse onto the air and into your home. As we celebrate our ten-year partnership, we salute the artists and audiences who have made this the longest-running anthology series in history.

SOME OF THIS SEASON'S HIGHLIGHTS

Tru
The truth and daring of Truman Capote, brought to life in Robert Morse's Tony-winning Broadway portrayal.

Cabeza de Vaca
An epic tale of a Spanish conquistador's shipwreck and eight-year trek across America.

Strangers in Good Company
A funny and fascinating chronicle of seven elderly women and their discoveries in an abandoned house.

Straight Out of Brooklyn
This look at a black family's battle against the odds launched the career of 19-year-old filmmaker Matty Rich.

Good Morning, Babylon
Two immigrant brothers discover America on the set of a D.W. Griffith epic. Greta Scacchi and Vincent Spano star.

Thank You & Goodnight!
Humor, heartache, drama and documentary merge in this off-beat look at the life and death of the filmmaker's grandmother.

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A GUIDE TO CURRENT AND UPCOMING FAMILY PROGRAMS ON PBS

Following is a list of outstanding programs that currently air or will air during the next several months on PBS stations. Because public television stations operate independently, these programs may be broadcast on different dates and at different times; consult your local listings to determine when to watch in your area.

Public television programs are made possible by a collaboration of funders, including individual subscribers, federal and state governments, businesses, colleges, foundations, and local governments. Almost all of the following programs have supporting educational materials; contact your local public television station for details.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

Featuring old-time band music favorites, "If You Knew Sousa" tells the story of a turn-of-the-century musical superstar.

Aetna, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

BARNEY & FRIENDS

Full of fun, music, and education, "Barney & Friends"—a series for preschoolers—stars a six-foot-tall purple dinosaur who comes to life through children's imaginations.

© Dennis Fuller

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

BEHIND THE SCENES

Comic magicians Penn & Teller host "Behind the Scenes," a series on the arts for eight- to twelve-year-olds and their families that encourages creative and critical thinking.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), McDonalds, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Andrew Mellon Foundation, Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Bingham Trust, Andy Warhol Fund, George Gund Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

CELEBRATING THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Evocative photographs help trace the evolution of American family life since the Civil War in "Celebrating The American Family," hosted by Jill Eikenberry and Michael Tucker.

MCI Communications Corporation, Public Television Viewers

CLUB CONNECT

On the series "Club Connect," teens tackle difficult questions about growing up in the 1990s—from handling peer pressure to choosing a career.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Michigan Department of Education

GHOSTWRITER

In the preteen series "Ghostwriter," kids discover the fun of reading and writing as they solve mysteries with the help of an invisible teammate.

© CTW/F. Micelotta

Nike, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, U.S. Department of Education, Public Television Viewers

GREAT PERFORMANCES

A journey through the world of hip-hop, rock, dance, and music videos, "Everybody Dance Now!" spotlights innovative street dancers and music video superstars.

Duracell Inc., Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

IN THE MIX

A series hosted by and for teens, "In the Mix" explores issues important to today's teenagers—from the use of steroids by high school athletes to winning college scholarships.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), The Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Nathan Cummings Foundation, The New York Community Trust, The Rockefeller Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

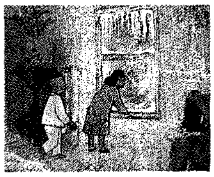
LAMB CHOP'S PLAY-ALONG

In the series "Lamb Chop's Play-Along," Shari Lewis and her family of wise-cracking puppets motivate preschoolers to participate actively in songs, stories, games, and magic tricks.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

LONG AGO & FAR AWAY

The series "Long Ago & Far Away" brings folk and fairy tales alive through animation. New episodes include "The Talking Eggs," an updated version of a Creole folk tale, narrated by Danny Glover.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National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Stride Rite Charitable Foundations

MASTERPIECE THEATRE

"Masterpiece Theatre" classics include "The Shiralee," a moving story about a proud Australian street fighter who takes custody of his young daughter.

Mobil Corporation

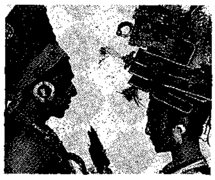
MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

For twenty-five years, preschoolers have been welcomed into the cozy, secure, fascinating world of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood."

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), The Sears-Roebuck Foundation, Public Television Viewers

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS

This episode of the ever-popular "National Geographic Specials" examines why one of the most highly developed civilizations of its time mysteriously collapsed in "Lost Kingdoms of the Maya."


© National Geographic Society

Chevron, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

NATURE

In "Echo of the Elephants," the "Nature" series travels to Africa to chronicle some of the most touching and intimate moments in the lives of these magnificent pachyderms.

American Gas Association, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Siemens, Canon, Public Television Viewers

NEWTON'S APPLE

"Newton's Apple" continues with exciting, enlightening science shows for the whole family—focusing on everything from Olympic sports to the Russian space program.

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"An Astronaut's View of Earth" captures the look and feel of seeing earth from space.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Johnson & Johnson, Lockheed, Public Television Viewers

READING RAINBOW

Featuring books like *Sam the Sea Cow*, "Reading Rainbow" host LeVar Burton takes kids aged five to eight on a series of reading adventures.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), National Science Foundation (NSF), Kellogg Company, Public Television Viewers

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN FRONTIERS

"Scientific American Frontiers" investigates a variety of scientific mysteries such as why native Americans introduced the fox to California's Channel islands.

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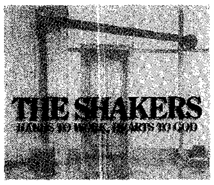
GTE Corporation

SESAME STREET

Besides teaching preschoolers their letters and numbers, the ever-popular children's series "Sesame Street" focuses on race relations as Big Bird takes part in the cultural traditions of Latin Americans.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

THE SHAKERS: HANDS TO WORK, HEARTS TO GOD



The award-winning "Civil War" director, Ken Burns, presents "The Shakers: Hands To Work, Hearts To God," a vividly bittersweet portrait of 200 years of a truly original way of life.

General Motors, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

SHINING TIME STATION

In the series "Shining Time Station," preschoolers enter the enchanted world of a magical railroad station featuring the eighteen-inch-tall Mr. Conductor (George Carlin).

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

SQUARE ONE TV

Motivating preteens to turn on to math, "Square One TV" features such spoofs as "Late Afternoon with David Numberman."

National Science Foundation, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Intel Corporation, Public Television Viewers

A 3-2-1 CONTACT EXTRA: Brainstorm: The Truth About Your Brain on Drugs

© CTW/Barbara Nitke

"A 3-2-1 Contact Extra: Brainstorm: The Truth About Your Brain On Drugs" illustrates the effects of legal and illegal drugs on the brain and body.

The Department of Health and Human Services Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA) through the National Science Foundation

TRAVELS

In "The Africa Passion," the "Travels" series explores the breathtaking beauty of Kenya and Tanzania while it examines the Western romanticization of Africa.

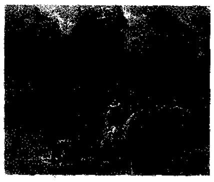
Lexus, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

In the fast-paced geography game show for preteens, "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?," contestants pit their wits against the wily Carmen and her gang.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Toyota, Holiday Inn, Public Television Viewers

WILD AMERICA


© Marty Stouffer Productions

To the delight of nature enthusiasts of all ages, "Wild America" has brought American wildlife into viewers' homes for over a decade.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Television Viewers

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A MESSAGE FROM FRED ROGERS . . .

© Family Communications

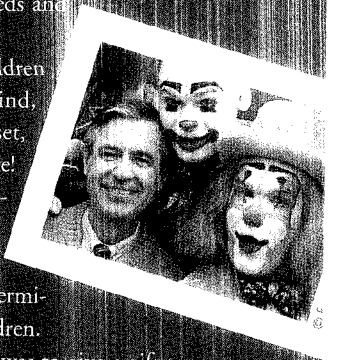
Television may be the only electrical appliance that's more useful after it's turned off. What's on the screen is just the beginning. One of our favorite stories here in this Neighborhood is about a two-year-old who, after watching our visit with Yo-Yo Ma, started using a popsicle stick for a bow on an old guitar. His mother wrote to tell us, "I've never seen anything like it. He actually cried until I told him we'd try to find some way for him to 'play the cello.'" That was three years ago, and very recently we learned that the little boy is still playing the cello, and his mother has decided to learn to play, too!

Television isn't something that's just *watched*. It's swallowed. . . and sometimes digested. We in public television have a responsibility to ensure that what we present to children is as healthy for them as the food they need to survive.

In a very real sense, the "educational" part of television, which is at the foundation of public television, is a matter of producers learning all we can about the needs and feelings of the children and their families who use our television work. For us, the question is not, "What can we sell them?" . . . or even "What can we *give* them?" . . . but rather, "Who are *they*?" and "What do *they* bring to the television set?"

No matter what our age, we all bring our own childhoods to every experience. Many parents also bring worry, tension, intense concern about human relationships, and the economy, but, along with that, a strong desire to give the best to their children. Parents want their children to grow up healthy — physically, emotionally, socially. They want them to succeed in life. They long to give them quality time. Parents want so much to be good parents.

Public television is the place on the television dial that parents can trust. Parents often tell me this. I think they mean that public television begins with the high ideals they want for their children. They think of public television as a place which has a genuine respect for their children as human beings with needs and feelings and growing values.



Just like a refrigerator or a stove, television is seen by children as something that parents provide. In a young child's mind, then, parents probably condone what's on the television set, just like they choose what's in the refrigerator or on the stove! That's why we who make television for children must be especially careful with what we produce, with the people we present, and with attitudes we show in television relationships — attitudes of respect, kindness, healthy curiosity, determination, and love . . . just as parents would want for their children.

The original purpose of public ("educational") television was to give a gift to people, a life-enhancing gift with no strings attached. Like all good gifts, the best gifts are the ones which have the chance of growing within us forever.

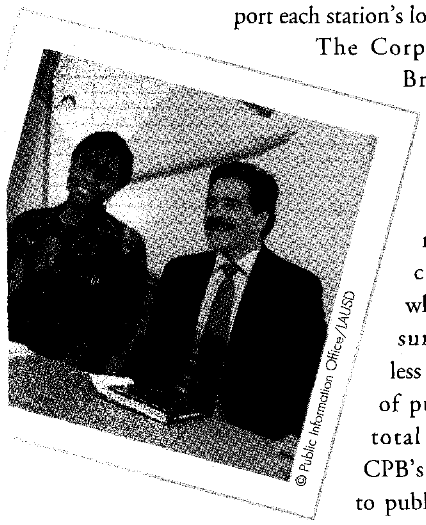
Fred Rogers, founder and president of Family Communications, Inc., has been a valued and trusted friend of public television for forty years. His program, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, *is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary.*

COMMUNITY SERVICE WITH NATIONAL RESOURCES

There's a reason public broadcasters are so committed to programs and projects that reach into the nation's classrooms and homes.

In fact, there are 344 reasons: the 344 public television stations whose signals reach ninety-eight out of every one hundred Americans, and who *are* public television.

All 344 of these nonprofit, community-based public television stations are locally governed. All are intensely responsive to the communities they serve, *communities that in turn support them.* And all of them can draw on the resources of such national organizations as PBS, whose initials stand for Public Broadcasting *Service.* While many viewers think of PBS as the public television network, it's actually a membership organization created by the stations. As a result, PBS focuses on meeting the needs of stations, distributing national programming, and providing an array of services to support each station's local efforts.



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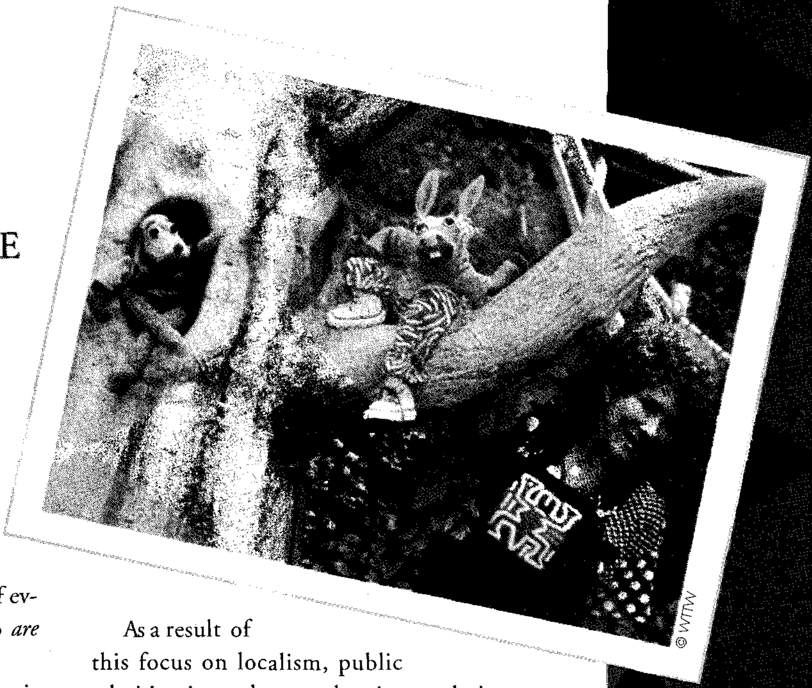
The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), another national organization, is the steward for the majority of the federal money public broadcasting receives — which, to most people's surprise, accounts for less than twenty per cent of public broadcasting's total budget. Half of CPB's money goes directly to public television stations where it is used to produce local programs as well as provide a variety of outreach services to the community. And much of the rest goes directly to supporting national television programming — like *Sesame Street, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood,* and dozens of other familiar children's programs.

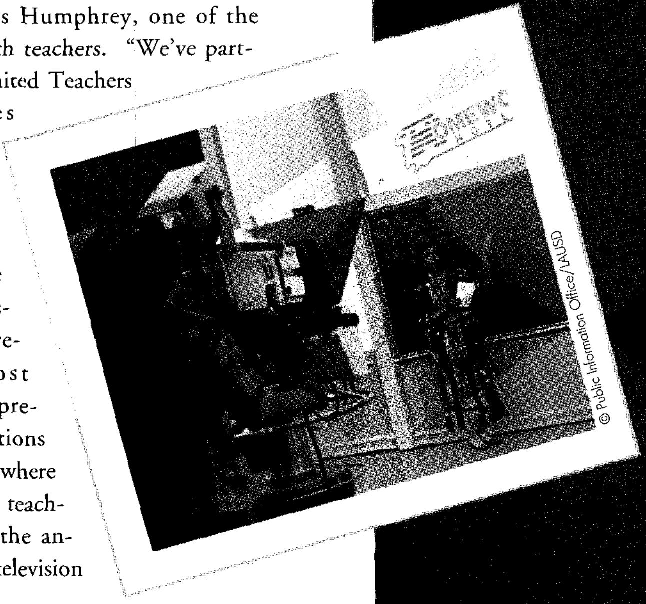


© WTTW

As a result of this focus on localism, public television is much more than just a television network; it's a confederation of community organizations, bolstered by national resources, that is committed to developing services to meet local needs. These services are often developed through partnerships with educators, service organizations, businesses, and government which extend their value many times.

In Los Angeles, for example, KLCS responded to requests from both school officials and community members for a program that would encourage and assist students in completing their homework.

"We developed *Homework Hotline,* a one-hour afternoon call-in program that helps students with homework problems," explains Doris Humphrey, one of the program's math teachers. "We've partnered with United Teachers Los Angeles to have teachers answering the phones, answering the students' questions. They relay the most difficult or representative questions to the studio, where the on-camera teachers work out the answers for the television audience."



© Public Information Office/LAUSD

The program is now in its eighth year, Humphrey reports, and helps about 400 student callers every

Clockwise from above: "Lamb Chop's Play-Along" is a popular PBS children's show; on "Homework Hotline" Doris Humphrey helps students and Catherine Webb and José Hernandez teach English.

EXTENDING THE VALUE OF PUBLIC TELEVISION

Public broadcasters have established so many effective programs, projects, and organizations to expand the benefits they offer Americans that a single story can't possibly cover all of them. Three in particular, however, deserve mention:

- *The Public Television Outreach Alliance* coördinates national outreach activities for the public broadcasting system. PTOA identifies issues of importance, develops special programming to galvanize interest and suggest solutions, and offers approaches for community-based programs that establish a framework for action. The Alliance has tackled such issues as drug and alcohol abuse, literacy, child care, and keeping families together.
- *The Caption Center at WGBH*, in Boston, celebrating its twentieth anniversary of extending the accessibility of television, pioneered the development of closed captioning. This technology uses decoders to give a written display of the dialogue, and has opened up television to hearing-impaired viewers. More recently, the Caption Center has developed a new technology to benefit visually-impaired viewers. Called Descriptive Video Service, it uses a separate audio channel to deliver a specially-developed narration that describes on-screen action.
- *The American Center for Children's Television (ACCT)*, established by the Central Educational Network and WTTW, in Chicago, is a new organization that is working within and throughout the television industry to encourage better children's programming. ACCT grew out of the success of the American Children's Television Festival, and sponsors seminars and workshops to bring broadcasters together with child advocates, experts in child development and health, educators, and others who can contribute to better services and programs for children.

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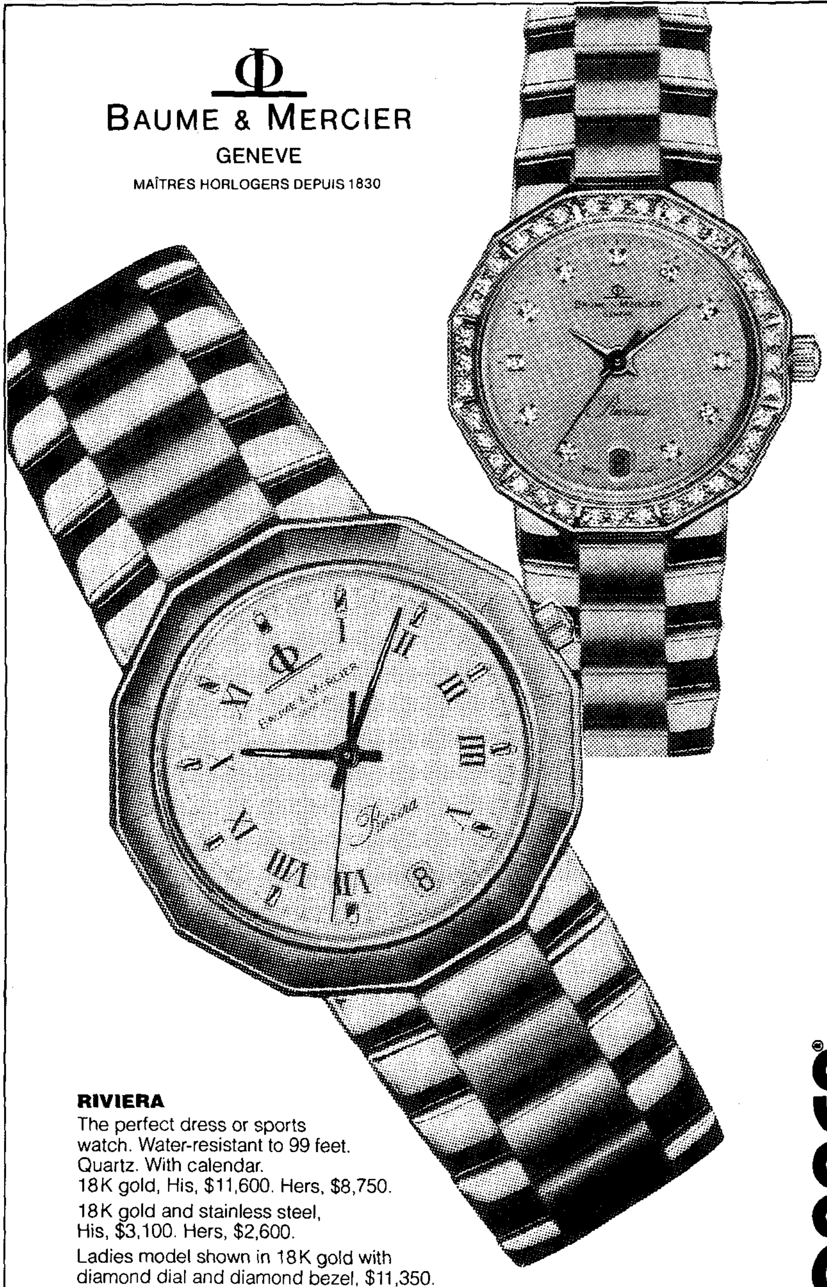

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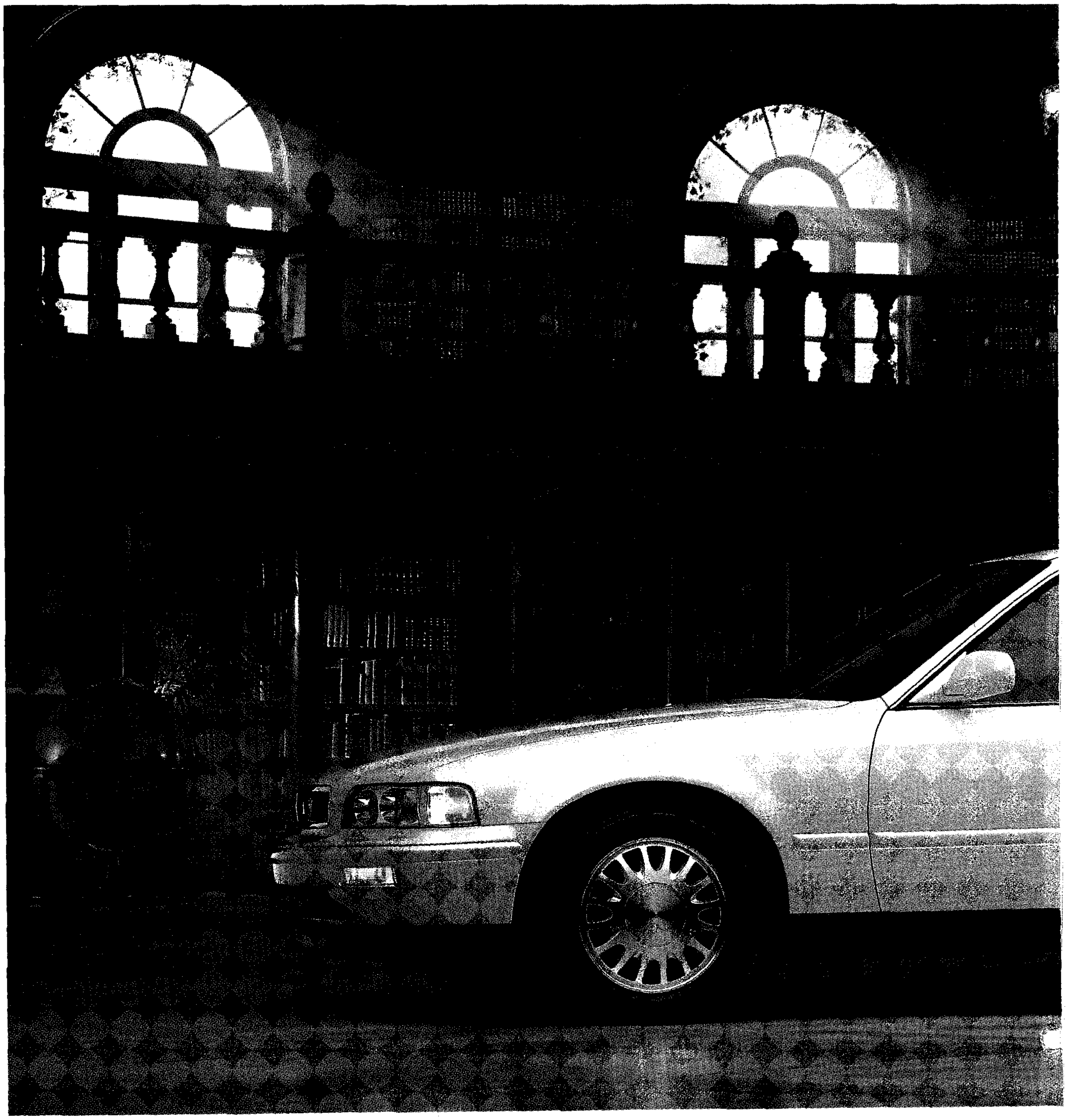

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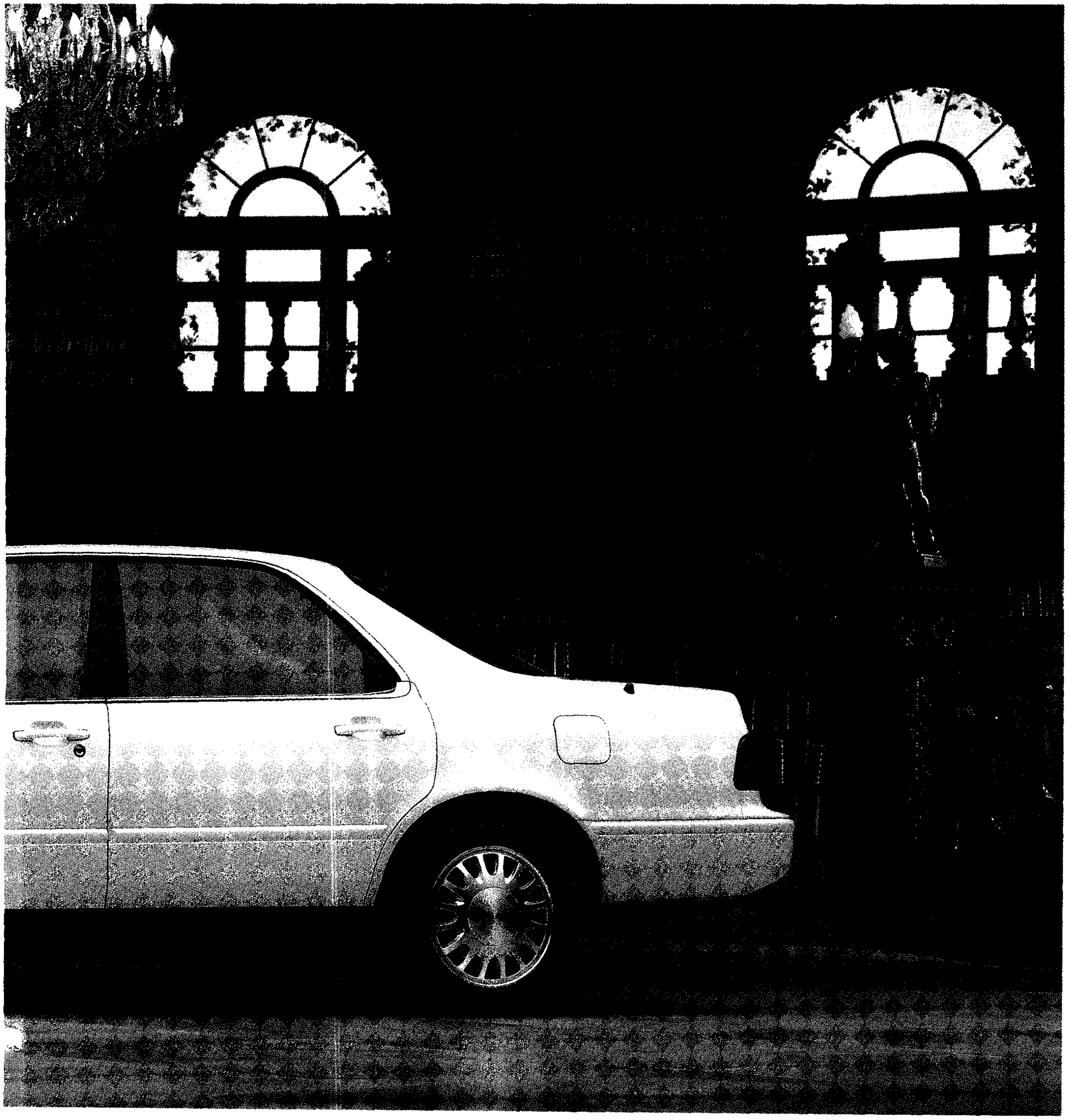

of everyday driving. While supple leather, an Automatic Climate Control System and burled walnut trim make the Legend cabin as comfortable and tasteful as it is serene. All of which goes to show that just because a statement is made quietly doesn't make it any less powerful. Call 1-800-TO-ACURA for more information.

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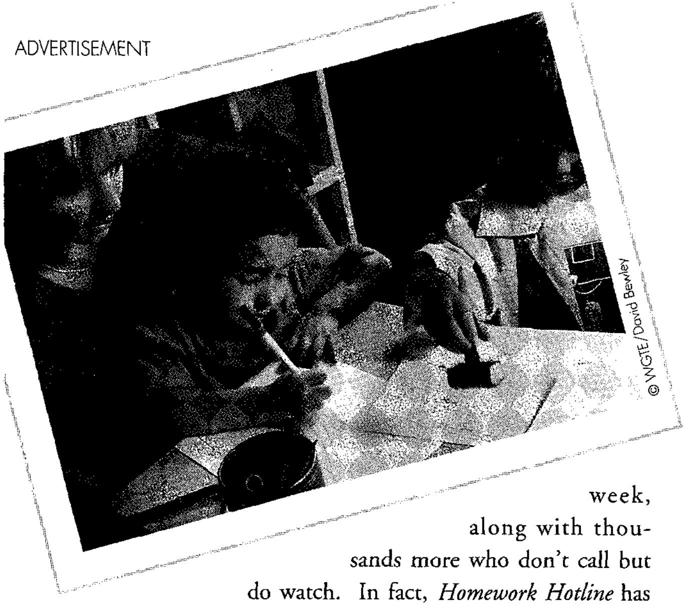

© WGTE/David Bewley

week, along with thousands more who don't call but do watch. In fact, *Homework Hotline* has been so successful that at least thirty-five school districts, here and around the world, have copied the idea.

SERVING AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

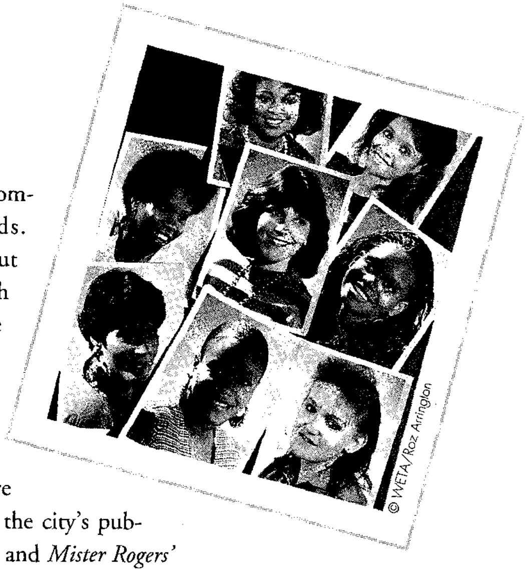
"Our goals were pretty direct: to improve children's reading habits and encourage them to use libraries," explains Patti Jay, community relations manager at KAET in Phoenix. To do so, the station developed a project called *Read Arizona* in coöperation with the Arizona Department of Library, Archives and Public Records. The project featured a series of video book reviews written and delivered by children from all over the state. The videotaped reviews, covering books about Arizona and the Southwest, were broadcast throughout the school year.

But KAET didn't stop there. "We mailed copies of the book list, along with a poster and free bookmarks, to public and school libraries and book stores throughout the state," Jay continues, "and they helped us reach many more kids."

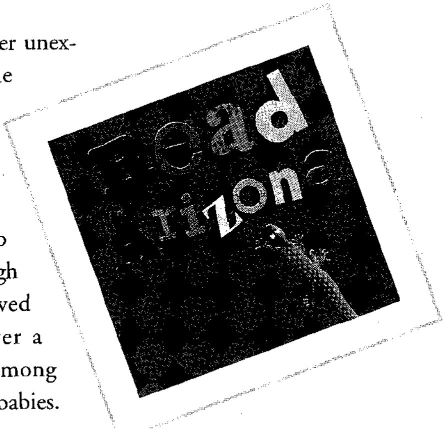
The results have been very rewarding. A librarian in Tucson wrote that "kids from all over Pima County are talking about books, and they ask for them by title!!! What a marvelous push for literacy!!!"

"What a marvelous push" — it's a phrase that could describe dozens of community-based efforts spearheaded by public television stations to address the needs of families and kids:

- In Topeka, Kansas, where KTWU worked with the YWCA, Every Person's Resource Center, and local businesses to implement *Phone Pal*, an after-school telephone hotline for the community's latchkey kids. *Phone Pal* receives about 300 calls each month from children who are home alone after school and want to hear the comforting voice of an adult.
- In Philadelphia, where WHYY, partnered with the city's public and parochial schools and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, sponsored a workshop called "How to Get the Most Out of Children's Television." Attended by 125 parents, the workshop offered tips on setting limits on television viewing, using television to increase children's learning power and writing skills, and dealing with violence on television.
- In New York City, where WNET works with hundreds of public and private schools in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut to develop student leadership through the Teen Leadership Institute, and encourages creativity and expression with an annual Student Arts Festival that draws more than 5,000 entries from kids in grades K-12.
- And in South Bend, Indiana, where WNIT, working with local parenting organizations, created the *Parenting Project* to educate parents on important child care topics ranging from car seat safety to kindergarten preparation.


© WETA/Roz Arrington

Some of these projects deliver unexpected dividends, as was the case with WETA's *Nine Months* in Washington, D.C. This extensive effort to improve prenatal care, undertaken in response to Washington's disturbingly high infant mortality rate, followed eight pregnant women over a twenty-four-week period. Among the results were eight healthy babies.



Clockwise from above: Eight women were featured on "Nine Months"; the "Read Arizona" logo; public television is helping out in dozens of community-based efforts.

"We aired a new program every week," said Ferne Barrow, the station's manager of community outreach. "They were shot partly on location, so our viewers could go with the women who 'starred'

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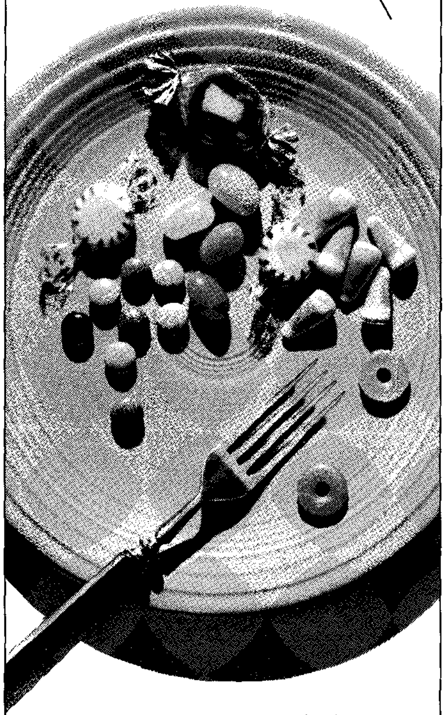
"Mom, can't I just have candy for dinner?"



You watch what your kids eat, but can you swallow what they watch? Are they overloading on a diet of empty TV programs? Not if they get a healthy portion of PBS.

Only the PBS menu offers Mr. Rogers, Bert & Ernie, Carmen SanDiego and now Ghostwriter, just to name a few. For 25 years we've fed the hearts and minds of generations of children.

Public Television.
You know it's good for them.
They just know it's good.

PBS

in the show to their doctors' appointments. We covered everything from prenatal nutrition to Caesarean birth."

WETA's extensive outreach program provided both viewers and non-viewers with information and resources. "We worked with the D.C. Office of Maternal Health to promote an information hotline for new and expecting parents. We distributed more than 12,000 prenatal information kits in English and Spanish, and provided video tapes of the series to more than 200 schools, community centers, hospitals, and health clinics. We really made an effort to reach prospective and expecting parents wherever we could."

Looking back over public broadcasting's record you find an unwavering commitment to programs and services that benefit American families.

One young woman, pregnant with her own first child during the series, wrote that watching it calmed her worries, answered many of her questions, and introduced her to eight women whom she came to feel were her friends.

"It was great to be able to share in the joy of watching each of their babies' births," she wrote. "I even cried...."

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

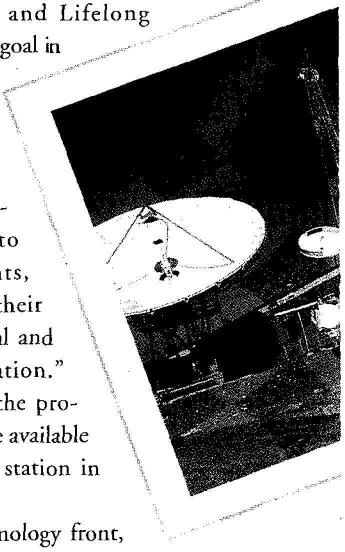
When you look back over public broadcasting's record you find an unwavering commitment to programs and services that benefit American families — that help preschoolers prepare for school and beyond; keep older children interested in the world around them and motivated to learn more; and help parents be better parents.

And, according to PBS President Bruce Christensen, that's what you will continue to find in the future. "Public service is the driving force in public broadcasting and no viewers in America are more deserving of our attention than children. Only noncommercial public television is more concerned with children's welfare than with their buying power.

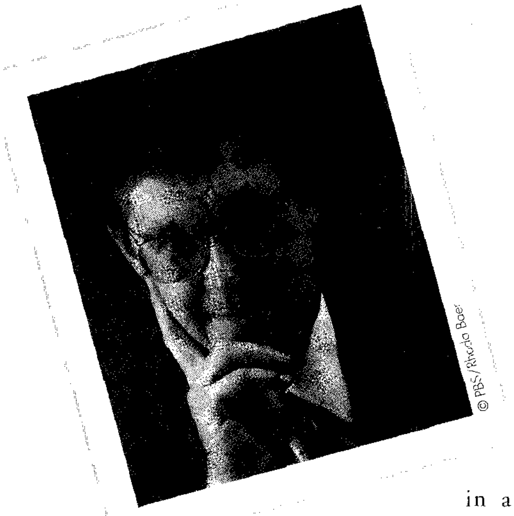
"The fact that our programming is free — available to virtually every household in the country — gives us an even greater responsibility to offer programs of value, and to extend their value with efforts that reach beyond the television set," Christensen continues. "You're going to see our services to families get better and stronger."

The evidence supports the PBS President. For example, KQED, in San Francisco, has recently undertaken a major research and planning project with funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Called the Parenting Project, it will identify and develop enhanced services for parents, families, and children.

"Every child's first and most important teachers are his or her parents," says Dr. Milton Chen, director of KQED's Center for Education and Lifelong Learning. "Our goal in the Parenting Project is to develop new and better ways for public television stations to support parents, and to enrich their children's formal and informal education." The results of the project will be made available to every public station in the country.



On the technology front, efforts are underway to develop public television's technical capacity so that stations can receive as well as transmit video and data. The change ushers

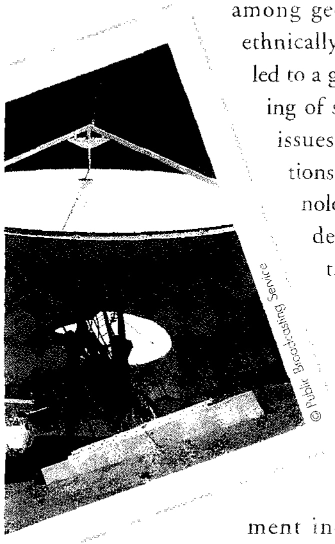


© PBS/Rhoda Baer

in a future where technology does more than feed information to students; it allows kids to learn through involvement and interaction.

Public broadcasters conducted one of the first national experiments with this two-way technology during the Presidential election campaign, providing a live computer link-up between students in sixteen schools. Students accessed a central database of political and election news, and debated on national issues via computer.

This constructive exchange among geographically and ethnically diverse students led to a greater understanding of social and political issues. Future applications of this new technology will allow students to synthesize their thoughts using video, text, and graphics and to learn by creating and sharing ideas. Projects currently in development include a national electronic magazine, written and edited by and for students, that will provide a national forum for student writing, art, and design.



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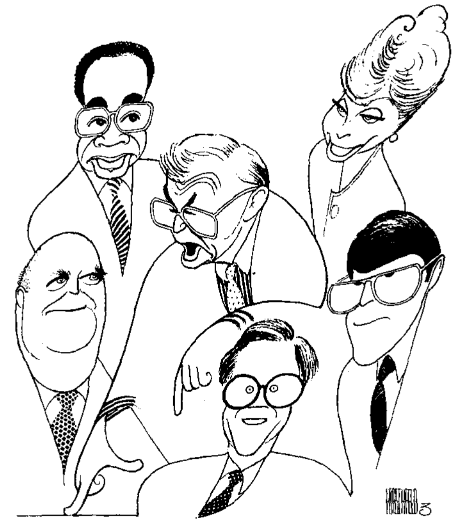
While this technology is just starting to take shape, one thing is clear: no matter how advanced technology becomes, it will be driven by public television's mission to educate, enlighten, and involve.



UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM

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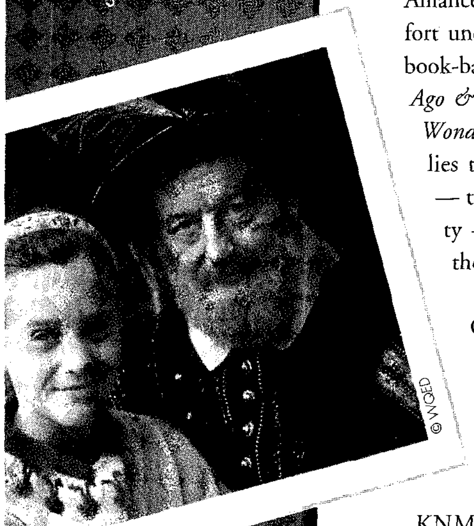

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© Alexandra King

Clockwise from above: The Family Literacy Alliance sponsors activities focusing on parent-child interaction; on "WonderWorks," a young girl meets a ghost; LeVar Burton is host of "Reading Rainbow."

"SOMETHING I COULDN'T PAY FOR"

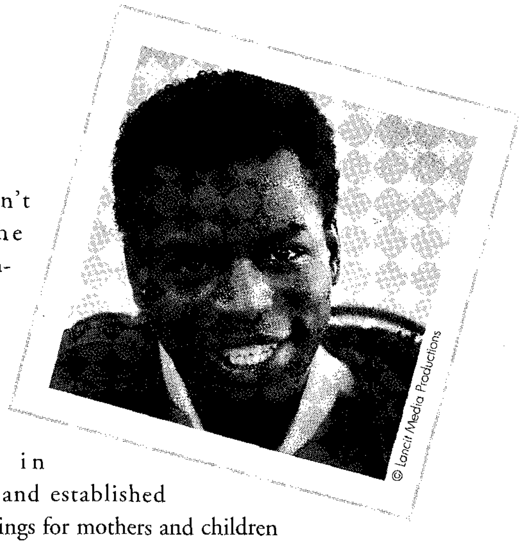
Nowhere is that mission more evident than in the work of the Family Literacy Alliance. The Alliance is a collaborative effort undertaken by the producers of three book-based public television shows: *Long Ago & Far Away, Reading Rainbow,* and *WonderWorks.* Its goal is to bring families together around stories and books — to inspire reading as a family activity — using television stories to lead the way.

In its pilot year, funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Alliance and its participating stations (WGBH, in Boston; WQED, in Pittsburgh; NETV, in Lincoln, Nebraska; WNED, in Buffalo; and KNME, in Albuquerque) established reading programs in a shelter for homeless families in Lynn, Massachusetts; an educational center for Cambodian refugees in Boston; a Native American wellness center outside Lincoln, Nebraska; and an EvenStart program in Albuquerque, New Mexico, among others.

The Alliance met Maureen Brown in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the Allegheny County Program for Female Offenders, a work-release program for women who get in trouble but want to get themselves back out in the world and back together. A mother of two, she was serving a sentence stemming from a theft.

Brown was being allowed to leave the facility during the day, and had started one job almost immediately, then a second — "I wanted my kids to know I worked," she says. But one of the consequences of her hard work was a schedule that left her no time for her daughters, aged twelve and eight. Susan, the younger, suffered the most; her grades slipped and her teachers noted an unfamiliar, unhappy attitude.

Try as she might, Maureen Brown couldn't break through. "Susan was very bitter," she explains. "Here's an eight-year-old girl who'd been real close to her mother all her life, and then she looked up and I wasn't there. She couldn't understand."



© Lancit Media Productions

Then the Family Literacy Alliance arrived in Pittsburgh and established regular meetings for mothers and children to watch programs together, and follow up with activities based on reading and writing. Brown brought her daughter to one of the meetings, and found a light coming back on in her life.

"It gave me a chance to get back with my daughter, to feel her out, to sit with her, to tell her — to show her — I loved her," she says. She managed to rearrange her work schedule so she and Susan could attend every meeting.

Brown is still working two jobs, one at the Renaissance Center for homeless people in nearby McKees Rocks, the other at a dry cleaner. But she's back in her own home, and her family is back to rights.

Her older daughter, now fourteen, is a bright, self-confident young woman who goes to Carnegie Mellon once a week and wants to be a pediatrician; Susan is enrolled in one of Pittsburgh's most desirable public schools. And both are proud of their mother; Susan recently asked her to quit her second job, saying that the family could save money because "I won't ask for anything more."

Brown smiles when she tells the story. "What that program really did was give me a chance to spend time with her. You know, we spend so much effort trying to get material things, we forget that our kids need *us* more than they need things.

"You see," she says softly, "the program gave me a chance to get back on the right track with my daughter. That's something I couldn't pay for even if I had all the money in the world."

Fred Guthrie, a Washington, D.C.-based writer, still watches Sesame Street.

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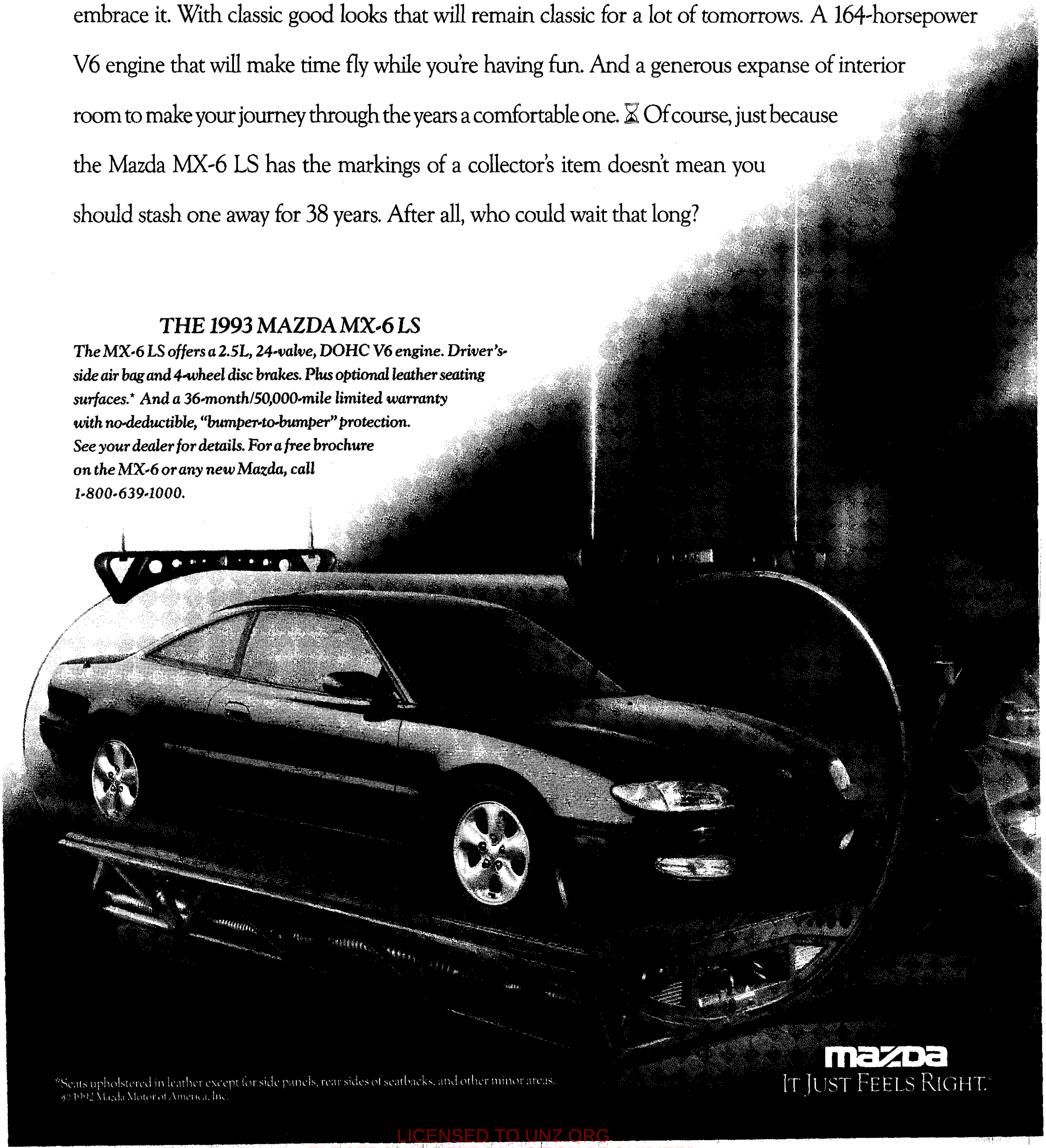

IT JUST FEELS RIGHT.

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*Seats upholstered in leather except for side panels, rear sides of seatbacks, and other minor areas.

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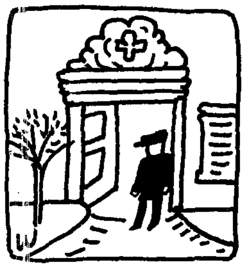
[*Continued from page* 76] make one of them a fine addition to a layette beset by prints of creatures great and small. The price is $12. Among one-piece stretchies for infants are two that ready the baby for preschool. At Julian & Sara, a charming new cubbyhole of a shop at 103 Mercer Street (Spring), a lavender-and-leaf-green stretchie by Petit Bateau has the word "Baby" embroidered on the left side of the button placket. Other words beginning with "B" make a vertical row beneath it—"Bear," "Book," and "Blueberries"—and each word is illustrated with a descriptive bit of embroidery; $41.50. A baby who has the Lycée Français in his future might be outfitted in a second such garment, by Jean Bourget, which is available at Trois Pommes, at 930 Madison Avenue (73rd). The legs and half of the torso are navy blue. The top of the bodice, which is cut like a Western shirt, is lemon yellow, and along its bottom border is the legend, in French, "Under a daisy, a rabbit wipes his glasses and reads Latin." The price is $92. Infinitesimal hand-crocheted white Mary Janes, with a decorative rosette, are $11 here, and, for those who can't resist, a matching layette cap is $17.

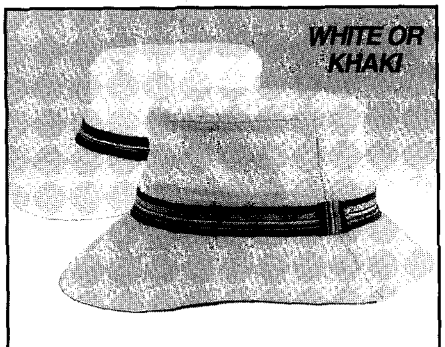


Nimble fingers near and far have been busy running up party dresses, and there is no shortage of choices for baby's first Christmas. Mulu Asfaw, who is seventy-eight years old and lives in Queens, has been turning her hand to fanciful crochet, and the results are for sale at Julian & Sara. The dresses have houndstooth patterns of peach and lime, or yellow and fuchsia, and collars of ivory silk yarn, crocheted so that it looks like snarly lamb's wool. The over-all effect is fetching, and the dresses (in sizes to fit newborn to eighteen months) are $100.

Monkeys & Bears, at 506 Amsterdam Avenue (84th), has a number of choices for bigger girls, sizes 2 to 6x. One made of cabbage-rose chintz—the material is halfway to upholstery weight—is trimmed at the Empire waist and on the round collar with gold tassels. Made by Izaroo, it has big bone buttons and is priced at $88. A second frock, by Brigid, is of wine velvet, set off by a handkerchief-linen white collar. It has a satin sash, and the price is $134. Those who like the Little Red Riding Hood effect can find an appealing hooded velour dress at Little Leepers, at 2580 Broadway (97th). It comes in raspberry or teal. The designer is Loli of Vermont, and the dress, for sizes 2 to 6x, zips up the front; $52. For sobersides, Trois Pommes can supply a red narrow-wale-corduroy dress. It has a scalloped collar of pristine white cotton with an embroidered border of red buds; $50, for sizes 6 to 18 months.

The Chocolate Soup, at 946 Madison (75th), specializes in hand-knit sweaters for both boys and girls, aged six months to twelve years. Examples include a violet sweater, by Christophe M.T., with intarsia fruit—a banana, an apple, a greengage plum, and a few cherries. The sweater is trimmed in pink. A sweater by Linda Oleatros has work-and-play motifs knit into it: crayons, pencils, paper clips, an eraser, and a ruler. Primary colors predominate in this one. The sweaters range from $86 to $200. Julian & Sara has a number of handsome hand-knit reindeer sweaters, for boys and girls. The sweaters are red, and the reindeer are white: $50, in sizes 1 to 7/8, by One of a Kind. Strawberry-soda-pink cotton cardigans with pearl snaps are for sale at Monkeys & Bears. Robin's-egg-blue, magenta, and black cardigans are also available. These have two patch pockets; the price is $24. Special-occasion cardigans, hand-knit of chenille yarn by Emmannuelle, in sapphire or amethyst, are $70, and have gold-tone buttons embossed with a heart and a key to unlock it.

Leg coverings of every description can be found on both the East and West Sides. At The Chocolate Soup, leggings that may be worn with tops or under dresses have been printed with leopard spots (Sam & Max), printed with red roses and blue tulips (Artwear by Holly), and tie-dyed (J.M. Originals), to name only three of the patterns on hand. The leggings range in price from $13 to $32, and in sizes from 6 months to size 14. Here, too, are Osh-Kosh blue-and-white striped overalls that the store has dyed red, orange, or submarine yellow: they're $32 or $35, depending on the size (6 months to size 7). For young children, Monkeys & Bears has wide-



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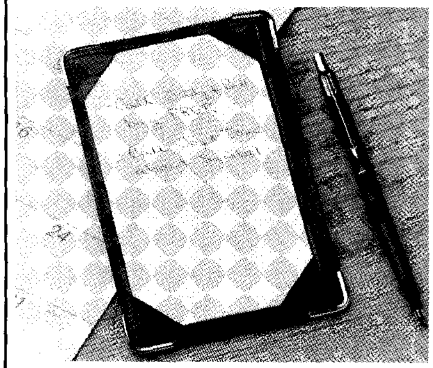

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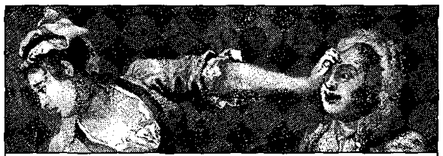

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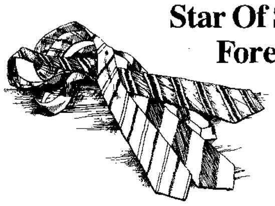

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wale-corduroy pull-on trousers in swimming-pool blue or grass green. They have elastic waists, and cost $36 (sizes 2/3 to 7/8). Julian & Sara has two kinds of red tartan pants: one pair, for girls wearing sizes 2 to 6x, is a Lycra blend and ends in stirrups; the other pair, for boys the same size, is baggier—wool trousers with two side pockets and an elastic waist. Both are by Galipette. And to dress up small boys Trois Pommes has a distinguished pair of navy-blue wool overalls. The price is $104.

Bébé Thompson, at 98 Thompson Street (Spring), has a row of boiled-wool jackets from the Austrian firm of Geisswein, for children aged six months to fourteen years. In addition to the traditional gray jacket with red trim, they come in a lot of edible shades, including celery with broccoli-green trim, and watermelon with rhubarb trim. The combination of the springtime hues with the thick wool is winning, and the prices range from $102 to $148, depending on size. Little Leepers has a number of funny red wool jackets embroidered with Mexican motifs, including cacti and sombreros. On the back, an appliquéd couple in traditional dress are doing a lively dance. The jacket has two patch pockets, and a price tag of $140 (sizes 4 to 14). Here, too, are some warm sacks by Baby Bag. The baby or toddler is tucked inside, with its head and arms sticking out, and the sack zips shut, eliminating the need for a blanket. The colors are red or blue; $50 to $60. To wear on top, Monkeys & Bears has a quilted blue jacket with a circlet of edelweiss where a monogram might be. It closes with big white snaps, and edelweiss also appears when the cuffs are turned up. The jacket is made by Miniature: Paris. Sizes are infant to two years, and the price is $92. A safari-style tomato-and-green plaid jacket, with a hood lined in red plush, might be worn by either a boy or a girl. The price is $120, for all sizes.

For walking into the new year, Bébé Thompson has a basketful of moccasin socks from Sweden. The moccasins are attached to striped socks, and the color combinations include candy-cane red and white, and Easter-egg pink and green; $20, from size 6 months up to size 5. Here, too, are some fun-to-wear sequinned slippers for ages eighteen months to five years. The sequins are red

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or blue, and the price is $36. Psychedelic high-tops covered with multicolored sequins are $48. For aspiring Claras, soft ballet slippers, black or pink, in sizes starting at 12 months, are $17, at Capezio East, 136 East 61st Street (Lexington). For tiny feet, Trois Pommes has a pair of burgundy corduroy lace-up bootees. They have a tartan lining; $21 (3 to 12 months). To keep cruising feet warm, if baby's not walking yet, nylon Polartec bootees by Baby Bag are $23.50 at The Chocolate Soup. They close with a drawstring, so they stay on. The color choice is red or blue, and the slippers have cozy felt lining and grip padding on the soles. To wear under them, Little Leepers has just got in a bushel of socks. These, too, by Tic Tac Toe, have non-skid soles. They come in a "Fantasia" assortment of colors, including both vertical and horizontal Carnaby Street stripes. They are $3 to $5.50 per pair.

If all the caps for sale in the city were set out in a line, they would certainly stretch from Bank Street to the Bronx Zoo. To pick just a few: A Mad Hatter black velvet topper with a green taffeta bow, by H.M. Woggle Bug, is $24 at Julian & Sara. At Little Leepers, there are, among other choices, a green plush deerstalker hat ($26) and a denim baseball cap with a bunch of blue silk cornflowers on the visor ($20). Slip-over-the-head balaclavas at Bébé Thompson are by Kenzo. They keep the neck and the sides of the face warm, and are good to slip on under hoods. (They have the added virtue of being impossible for a baby to take off.) The colors include green with turquoise trim; $32. Schoolgirl berets, in wine, are $22 at Trois Pommes, and Madeline-style wool felt boaters, but red rather than yellow, have red ribbons around their brims; $27 at the same store.

Finally, for changing into something else entirely, the Enchanted Forest, at 85 Mercer Street (Spring), has some festive papier-mâché masks from Mexico. The masks are animal faces: a white dog, a very beaky chicken, a lizard, a silvery-gray fish, and a burning-bright tiger. All have red, white, pink, and green ribbons hanging from where their ears would be, which contribute to their carnival air. The masks aren't a bit scary-looking, and they are made to fit small faces; $12. ♦

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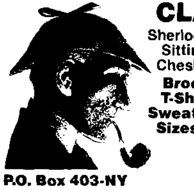

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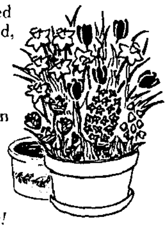

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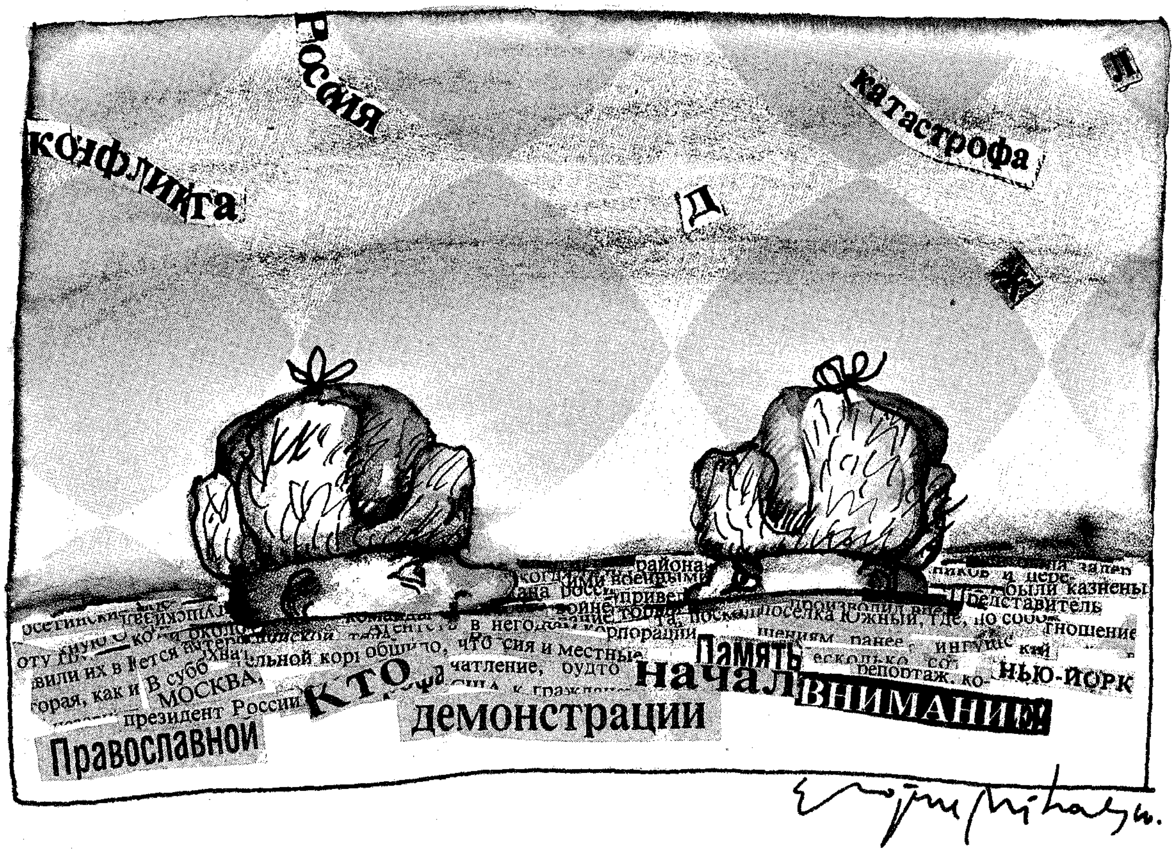
REPORT FROM MOSCOW

THE TRIAL OF THE OLD REGIME

by David Remnick



THE relics of Soviet Communism are passing quietly into the museums of the world and into the flea markets where kitsch is sold. "The Great Utopia," an exhibition of early revolutionary art, has drawn enormous crowds in Amsterdam, Frankfurt, and New York, and will soon head for Moscow. On the Arbat, the main pedestrian mall in Moscow, young capitalists are conducting a bankruptcy sale of the fallen regime. They sell jackboots, epaulets, Warsaw Pact compasses, thick tomes on dialectical materialism and scientific Communism. Maps of the Soviet Union are now sold as arch amusements, like bowling shirts or lava lamps. One student I met on the Arbat this fall was making a killing with an array of silk and velvet Communist Party banners. "I buy them cheap from retired apparatchiks," he said. "They dig them out of the closets, and then I sell them for five times what I paid."

In the triumphant days following the defeat of the putsch in August of 1991, the newspapers were filled with speculation about what would become of the Lenin Mausoleum, that transcendent model of Soviet kitsch. Surely Lenin's waxy remains should be given a decent burial. Surely a better use could be found for the neo-Cubist tomb on Red Square. A museum? An office building? A Pizza Hut? Russia's President, Boris Yeltsin, hinted broadly that he, too, would just as soon put Lenin's corpse in the ground and get on with the new era.

For a while, the leading figures of the Communist Party gave Yeltsin little reason to fear them. He could afford a sense of irony. A few old apparatchiks gave interviews voicing muted resentment that Yeltsin, in a series of three decrees issued in August and November of 1991, had "undemocratically" outlawed the Communist Party and seized its properties. But their voices were strained, wan, not quite convincing. Viktor Grishin, a former member of the Politburo, who had made a feeble attempt to challenge Mikhail Gorbachev for the top Communist Party post in 1985, became a pathetic and fitting symbol of the old order's sorry fate: he dropped dead while waiting in a long line at his local pension office. He was hoping for a raise.

Despite the drama and ruthless speed with which the Soviet Union has been dismantled, much of the old regime survives. The smartest of the Communist Party men long ago hired themselves out as *biznesmeny* and *konsultanty*. The average apparatchik hardly needed to leave his chair. Although the headquarters of the Communist Party's Central Committee has become the headquarters of the Russian government, the personnel inside is much the same. A few weeks after the failed August coup, one of Yeltsin's aides visited Aleksandr Sokolov, the commandant of the Central Committee building, and asked for a copy of its old phone book. The Yeltsin

EUGENE MIHAESCO

government needed experienced bureaucrats. "The result is that most of the same people are sitting in the same offices as they did a year ago," Sokolov told Michael Dobbs, of the Washington *Post*. "When we were forming the new structures, we had to hire people from the old structures. Our supporters—the people who came to rallies and street demonstrations—didn't know anything about how to run a country."

In the Russian parliament, the most influential bloc of deputies is now aligned with the Civic Union, a band of moderate-to-conservative bureaucrats, provincial bosses, and collective-farm chairmen. A more reactionary alliance, of nationalists and Communist ideologues, known as the National Salvation Front, influences another sizable bloc of votes. The Communists in the Russian legislature never really renounced their allegiance to the Party. Hard-liners like Sergei Baburin talk of the "renewal" of the "old ideals," and of vengeance for the destruction of the Party. The conservative newspaper *Dyen* (*Day*) has written of seizing power "by any means." When Yeltsin confronts the next session of parliament, beginning December 1st, he will be able to count on the firm support of no more than twenty-five per cent of the deputies.

Away from the daily political struggles that dominate post-totalitarian Russia, a historical sideshow is going on—a judicial battle over the life, death, and potential resurrection of the Communist Party. Early this year, after members of the old regime had recovered from the shock of the coup and its humiliating aftermath, a group of thirty-seven Communist deputies petitioned the newly formed Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation for a hearing, declaring that Yeltsin's decrees outlawing the Party were unconstitutional. They insisted that Yeltsin was acting as a dictator while pretending to be a democrat. A group of fifty-two anti-Communists—Yeltsin's supporters in the parliament—filed a counter-petition, claiming that the Communist Party was an unconstitutional organization. They agreed with Yeltsin's November 9, 1991, decree that the Party "was never a party" but, rather, "a special mechanism for the creation and realization of political power."

On May 26, 1992, Valery Zorkin, the chief justice of the Constitutional Court, decided to try the suits simultaneously. After all, he declared, the issue was the same: Was the Communist Party of the Soviet Union a constitutional political party or something else?

Since late 1987, with the rise of such historical societies as Memorial and the publication in the press of stories about the atrocities of the Stalin era, scholars and human-rights activists have wondered if a time would ever come in the Soviet Union for a legal accounting, a Nuremberg-style trial. The mere mention of a trial was revolutionary, for one of the fundamental principles of the Bolsheviks had been a dismissal of the primacy of civil law. Constitutions had been written, celebrated in the pages of *Pravda*, and ignored: the Party was above the law, or, as Lenin put it in 1918, the dictatorship of the proletariat "is unrestricted by law." Within months of taking power, Lenin liquidated the fragile legal system that had been in place since the czarist reforms of 1864, and initiated a system of state terror that was designed to intimidate the population and insure the survival of the regime. "We must execute not only the guilty," Lenin's Commissar of Justice, Nikolai Krylenko, said. "Execution of the innocent will impress the masses even more."

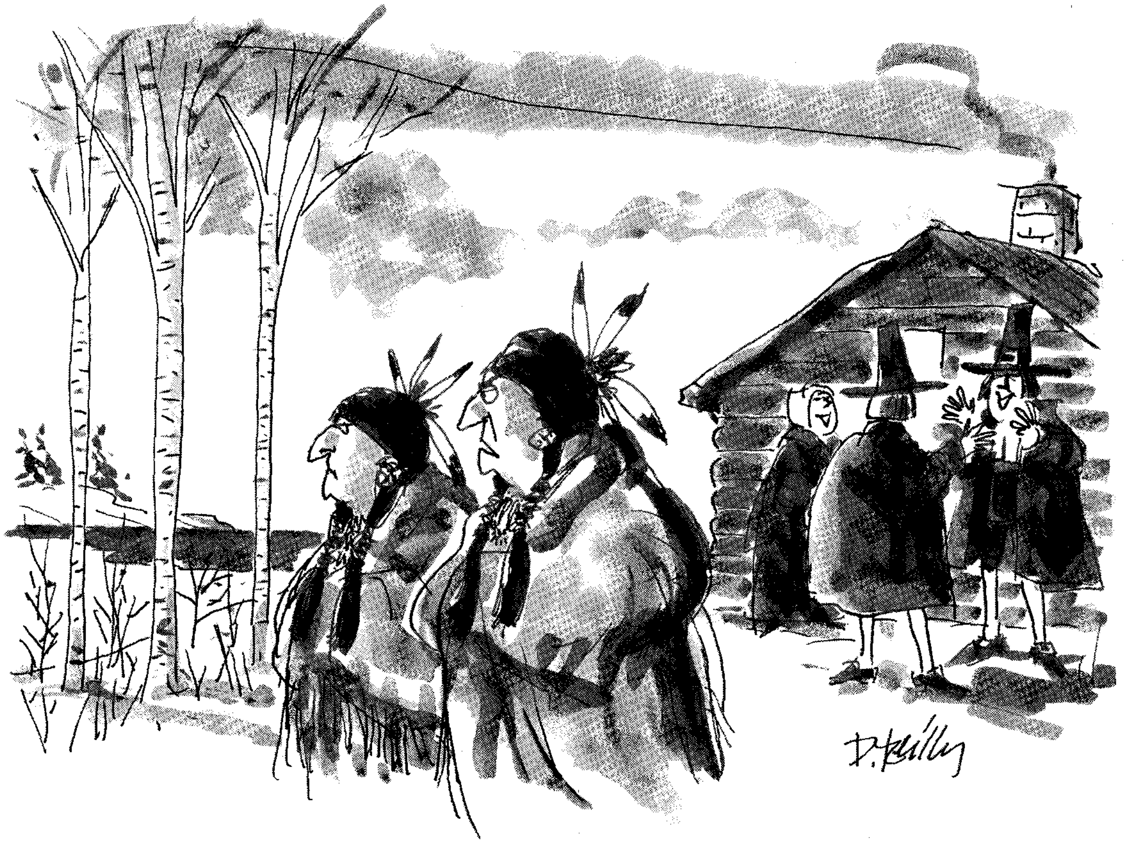
Some of the best-known democratic activists in the country, despite their hunger for historical judgment, have worried about the wisdom of a trial centered on the Communist Party. With the economy in collapse, with political structures so unsettled, and with moral questions of responsibility and repentance so painful and raw, where would such a trial lead? "Finally, the time has come for this reckoning, and for repentance, but our circumstances are so peculiar in Russia that such trials are bound to fail," Arseny Roginsky, a founder of Memorial, told me one evening in September. "The subject of the Nuremberg trials was war crimes, and the criminals were being judged by the victors—the victims of those crimes. Here we must judge ourselves. We judge each other. And who is unsullied? Who was a pure victim of the Party? Who was not complicit? I realize that that is not the stated purpose of the Constitutional Court, but those are essential questions."

The trial was certain to be hopelessly confused—a political event in which old rivalries and resentments would be at issue. The Communists wanted the forum to charge Gorbachev with betrayal of the Party and to charge Yeltsin with the collapse of Soviet power. Yeltsin's team wanted to discredit Gorbachev—to take the shine off his historical reputation—and to make sure that the old men of the Party had no easy way to build up a conservative opposition. What was more, this was, in essence, a Constitutional Court without a constitution. The post-Communist state was still operating under the old Soviet constitution, while waiting for a new one to be written and approved. How could a new institution operating without precedent or guidelines administer true justice? No one knew.

Gorbachev, for his part, had become a bitter, deluded man, unable to understand why his fellow-Russians would want to do anything except celebrate him. From the first announcement of the trial, he declared unequivocally that he would refuse to testify in court. It offended his dignity, his stature, his sense of propriety. He would not be questioned in court. In public, in private meetings, and in an interview with me one afternoon this fall, he wore his resentment like a pistol. "Look," he said. "I am not going to take part in this shitty trial."

THE Constitutional Court convened on the morning of July 7, 1992. The courtroom was a remodelled meeting room in a part of the Central Committee complex which had once been the offices of the Party-membership commission. Thirteen judges, all but one of whom were former members of the Communist Party, sat on a curved dais in front of a hammer and sickle and the Russian tricolor, the czarist-era flag. They wore long black robes, a strangely elegant and ecclesiastical outfit. The court had bought the fabric from the headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Church, and then Slava Zaitsev, the best-known fashion designer in Moscow, had shaped it for judicial purposes. The haphazard mixture of symbols underscored the historical jumble prevalent in the court—the looming presence of the past, the fragility of the new.

Instead of brandishing a gavel to preserve order in the court, Chief Justice Zorkin rapped his pen against a golden plate that dangled before him, gonging



"I liked the original Pilgrims, but this new crowd can't talk about anything but dealmaking."

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the lawyers into silence. Zorkin's task was as complicated as that of any jurist in modern times. In a country with such a dubious legal history, he had to invent the procedures and the decorum of the Constitutional Court while he was also presiding over what would surely remain for many years its most sensational trial. Zorkin himself had been a member of the Communist Party until October of 1991—a fact that initially gave the pro-Communist side a feeling of relief—but he did not romanticize the country's regard for law. "We have always swung from the icon to the axe," he told me. "All those who came to power tried to make themselves into icons, but then they were cut down by the axe, metaphorically speaking. Every ruler liked to wield state power, but no one really tried to build a rule-of-law state. . . . It is too soon to talk of Russia as a democratic state. Only these first few steps have been taken toward the rule of law."

On the first day of the trial, an angry crowd of pro-Communist demonstrators gathered outside the building. They yelled at the police, demanding to be let in. This was largely the same crowd that staged regular weekend protests at the Lenin Museum, near Red Square, during which it sold hard-line, neo-Stalinist newspapers and carried placards saying "Gorbachev and Yeltsin: To the Gallows!" Inside, the Communists, who had initiated the legal proceedings, argued, in tones of injury and outrage, that they were "on trial" only because they had had the bad luck to lose power after the coup. One of the first speakers for the Communist side was Viktor Zorkaltsev, a Communist deputy in the Russian parliament, who shifted from ornate respect to high indignation within seconds.

"High Court! Esteemed Chairman!," Zorkaltsev began. "The party that is banned is the party that consolidated society and rallied it to battle against Fascism, thus insuring the victory in the Great Patriotic War and sustaining, together with the people, irreplaceable human losses. . . . This does not mean that there have been no mistakes or negative moments in the Party's activities. There was the dramatic phase of Stalinism, in the thirties; there was suppression of dissent in the seventies; and there was the apostasy of the Party élite during the Gorbachev period. All this happened. At the same time, everyone knows that there have always been forces within the Party that rose up against these vices. And so it renewed itself, cleansed itself of this scum—sustaining losses, restoring its ranks, maintaining its ideals. And now, once again, this process is interrupted, and it is banned at a turning point. . . .

"Having shackled the Party, the [democrats] have destroyed the national economy and the union itself. They have changed the social system. The carving up of Russia has begun. The country has arrived at a dead end. What Hitler, world Fascism, and capitalism were not able to accomplish has now become possible after the banning of the Party. The ban on the C.P.S.U. is also a signal to other parties: 'Beware! You are next!' And many parties feel this danger. Therefore, only those who pathologically hate democracy and do not accept the socialist idea are gloating on this occasion. Thoughtful politicians do not approve of the President's decrees and do not support them."

And so on. The party that had invented the term "concentration camp" in 1918 and sent armed troops from the Baltic fleet to shut down the Constituent Assembly that same year would be shameless to the end. Its members would argue their case on the basis of civil liberties, political pluralism, and the historical record. The Party men said now that the country had triumphed under their rule and gone to ruin in their absence. Such was history as they were prepared to present it in court.

When that high-minded tactic did not seem convincing to the court, or perhaps even to the Party men themselves, the Communists' tone shifted from mock-heroic to threatening. At one point, another of the Party's representatives, Dmitri Stepanov, said that if

Yeltsin's decrees were eventually declared constitutional in court the Communists were prepared to use "the same methods" to grab power that the members of the August coup had used. "Emergency committees are nothing out of the ordinary," he said. "We have them all the time." He also defended the "alleged" brutality of the Party by saying that more people were killed in a couple of years in traffic accidents in Russia than had been killed by Stalin. Besides, he added, the Party had never been as brutal as the United States Army: "The Americans mowed down whole villages in Vietnam, whereas in the Baltic states we just exiled people to Siberia."

Sergei Shakhrai, Yeltsin's lead advocate before the Constitutional Court, was also prepared to argue the historical record. Shakhrai, a celebrated jurist in his mid-thirties, had written nearly all Yeltsin's legal decrees during the siege of the Russian parliament, known as the White House, in August of 1991. With the help of two other lawyers, Andrei Makarov and Mikhail Fedotov, Shakhrai set out to establish a case against the Communist Party based on a record of dictatorship, deception, and violence.

"The organization that called itself the C.P.S.U. was neither a de-facto nor a de-jure party," Shakhrai said at a news conference. "According to every canon of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state and the law, we had a state that called itself the C.P.S.U. There was a particular group of persons who dealt with government and had a monopoly on the state: the one and a half million people in the Party *nomenklatura*, several million civil servants, and, finally, the special apparatus of coercion. The K.G.B. was the armed detachment of this organization that called itself the C.P.S.U., and it was used even for the physical destruction of dissidents. . . . Essentially, we had a regime in which the basic laws of the state and the society were the rules of the Communist Party."

Among Shakhrai's first witnesses were three well-known political dissidents and former political prisoners: Lev Razgon, a writer who spent more than a decade in forced labor camps under Stalin; Vladimir Bukovsky, who was in the camps under Brezhnev from 1967 until he was finally traded to the West for the Chilean Communist leader Luis Corvalán, in 1976; and Gleb Yakunin, a dissident Russian Orthodox priest, who was imprisoned and was later forbidden to practice in Moscow. All three men provided firsthand testimony to the Party's brutality. To supplement the historical record, Richard Pipes, a historian at Harvard University and the author of "Russia Under the Old Regime" and "The Russian Revolution," submitted into evidence an essay outlining the Communist Party's assumption of absolute state power within three months of the October coup. He wrote, in part:

> From the point of view of historical scholarship, the so-called party of the Bolsheviks was, of course, not a party, but an organization of a wholly new type, which had some features of a political party: Its structure was without precedent, an organization which was outside government, which controlled the government and controlled everything, including the country's wealth. It was beyond any outside control. In no sense of the word was it a political "party," nor a voluntary social organization. . . . This political organization of an absolutely new type . . . was a precedent for the Fascist party of Mussolini and the Nazi party of Hitler and the countless so-called political parties of a totalitarian character which, beginning in Europe and then spreading throughout the world, established single-party government. . . . Never, in all its years of activity, did the Communist Party consider itself responsible to the law or constitution. It always regarded its will and its goals the decisive factor; it always acted willfully, that is, unconstitutionally.

Although the testimony of former political prisoners and Western historians was impressive enough, Shakhrai and his team meant to build an even more specific case. As a bureaucratic machine, the Party and the K.G.B. left behind a paper trail of tens of millions of documents. Shakhrai petitioned a new Russian government agency concerned with the declassification of Party and K.G.B. archives to provide documentary proof, and not merely anecdotal evidence, of the way the Communist Party had wielded and abused power. "Every kid in school now knows about the horrors perpetrated by the Communist Party, but we want to prove our case legally, with documents, so it cannot be denied," Andrei Makarov said.

WHEN Shakhrai and his colleagues first considered using the archives, they had no idea what would be available to them. In the last, frantic hours of Communist Party rule in the Soviet Union, officials and their assistants at the Central Committee headquarters had ransacked their desks and emptied their safes. For two days after the failure of the coup, they had fed one incriminating document after another into shredding machines. To destroy everything in the archives would have taken months or years, yet there was a chance, at least, that they could eliminate all evidence of the Party's support of the coup and other recent embarrassments. They had little time left. Thousands of furious demonstrators shouted up at the windows of the Central Committee—shouted for the destruction of the Party, the confiscation of its properties. The same crowds of students, housewives, workers, and intellectuals who had defended the Russian White House now fanned out across the city, toppling the monuments of the regime and carrying signs that read "Smash the K.G.B.!" and "Send the Party to Chernobyl!" and "Bring the Party to Trial!" The apparatchiks could not work fast enough. And then the shredders began to jam and break, one after another: in their haste, the men of the Party had failed to remove the paper clips.

With the shouts from the street throbbing in their ears, some panicked officials suggested building a huge bonfire in the courtyard. Their juniors, however, pointed out that if the demonstrators saw smoke coming from the Central Committee they would know what was happening and would storm the building. What could they do? Party workers were already driving truckloads of material away through the hidden tunnels and the back exits of the building, and even that was not enough. There was so much to destroy and hide! And so now these ashen men—men who had ruled the last empire on earth with an inimitable blend of insouciance and banality—began tearing documents apart with their bare hands.

The Party men, of course, were not interested merely in history's judgment. They refused to leave anything to the masses. To the very end, their serene sense of entitlement guided them. They stole telephones, computers, fax machines, television sets, video recorders, stationery. Anatoly Smirnov, an aide in the Party's International Department, testified that his superior, Valentin Falin, gave him six hundred thousand rubles in cash and told him to stash it in his personal safe immediately. "And change the nameplate on my door," Falin ordered. Falin was sure that if he identified himself as a people's deputy rather than as a Central Committee secretary he would be immune from future prosecution.

Falin had a great deal to answer for. His office was in charge of dispensing millions of dollars from the state purse to "brotherly parties," or terrorist organizations, in Greece, Portugal, the United States, Angola—nearly a hundred countries in all, according to the Russian government. He ran a secret workshop within the Central Committee that produced fake passports and beards and mustaches for operatives on the road. Falin eventually took refuge in Germany, lecturing to university students in Hamburg. He is considering applying for citizenship.

"Those were awful days for us," Vladimir Ivashko, who served as Gorbachev's Deputy General Secretary in the final year of the Party's life, told me. "We were all terrified. We were suffering terribly inside the Central Committee. The Party was in the midst of reform, but no one would listen to that! It was terribly unfair!"

On August 23, 1991, Yeltsin ordered the Central Committee building sealed and took command of the archives of the Communist Party and the K.G.B. There is no telling what had been lost or destroyed, but tens of millions of papers are now in government hands.

The Shakhrai team could not possibly hope to read even a fraction of the available documents, but it was able to obtain files describing in painful detail the purges of the nineteen-thirties and the repression of dissidents in the sixties and seventies, and also transcripts of Politburo meetings at which the invasion of Afghanistan was discussed.

In August of 1992, the court recessed, and Shakhrai, Fedotov, and Makarov read through tens of thousands more pages of documents marked "*Sovershenno Sekretno*," or "Top Secret." They were preparing for the climax of the trial, scheduled for late September and early October, when some of the biggest names of the Gorbachev era were to testify: Politburo members and Central Committee secretaries known mainly by their grainy portraits and the rumors of their politics and personalities, among them Falin, Yegor Ligachev, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Vladimir Dolgikh, Aleksandr Yakovlev, and Ivan Polozkov.

Gorbachev, for his part, was still warning the court that he had no intention of testifying, saying, "I would not appear even if they dragged me there in handcuffs." (After this remark, the puckish daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, or *Independent Newspaper*, published a front-page cartoon of Gorbachev being dragged to the court, cuffed.) The lawyers on Yeltsin's side certainly wanted to question Gorbachev, mainly to establish the idea that no one was above or beyond the legal system, but they also felt that they could do without testimony from him. Mainly, it was the Communists who wanted to put their former General Secretary on the stand, to lacerate him for what they said was his betrayal of the Party. "Gorbachev had evil plans," Dolgikh, a former Politburo member, said. "He destroyed the Party in 1989. Sure, the Party made mistakes. But the whole world recognized our power. When there was a Party, this country was not falling apart." Ligachev, who had been the No. 2 man in the Party from 1985 to 1990, called Gorbachev a "revisionist"—the word that Stalin had once used like a branding iron on his doomed opponents. "Gorbachev started us on the path of anti-Communism," Ligachev said. "*Perestroika* lost its way and headed toward bourgeoisism."

AFTER the first few days of the trial, most Russian and foreign journalists stayed away. They had more urgent things to do than cover this curious epilogue to the Communist era. There were wars in Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and, later, Tajikistan. There were bread lines in Armenia. Vast hunks of Russia, from the northern Caucasus to Yakutia, were threatening to break away from Moscow's rule. The crime rate was spiralling upward almost as quickly as inflation. The Russian Army was threatening to go to war in Moldova. The West was worried that the republics were playing politics with the control of nuclear weapons. There were reports of arms deals with Iran and China. In Latvia and Estonia, some of the heroes of the independence movements showed themselves to be racists, forcing Russians, Poles, and other non-Balts into the status of second-class citizenship, and, in anger, Yeltsin put a halt to the withdrawal of troops from those Baltic states just weeks after it began.

For most Russians, the trial was an afterthought. Still, after living and working as a journalist in Moscow for the last four years of Soviet rule, I wanted this final glimpse of the old regime—the last, exhausted generation of Communist leaders. For so many years, the Soviet people, and the world, had seen these men as distant anti-gods, men with

BEADS OF RAIN

Each day I've looked
into the bevelled mirror
on this desk, vainly
asking it questions
reflection cannot answer.

Outside, fog and frost
and silver olive leaves.
I can see at most
a half field's depth,
then the trees are lost
in the gauzy mist
like thin unbraceleted arms
swallowed by billowing sleeves.

I'd like to face
that stringent looking glass
transparent to myself
as beads of rain
pooled on a green leaf.

But ever self-composed
in self-regard,
and my eyes opaque
as a dancer's leotard,
to see straight through myself
I need what love supplies:
its dark arrows, dear,
not its white lies.

—CAROL MOLDAW

"The way I see it, the Constitution cuts both ways. The First Amendment gives you the right to say what you want, but the Second Amendment gives me the right to shoot you for it."

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rumpled faces and dark fedoras, possessed of immense and mysterious powers. In the first years of the *perestroika* era, their unearthly quality faded somewhat as Gorbachev stripped Moscow of the old ubiquitous portraits and slogans. But they were still accountable to no one, available to no one. By the end of the decade, the press, both foreign and domestic, had begun to learn more about these elusive shades from their opponents, from rumor, even from actual interviews. But until now they had manipulated interviews as surely as they had the state. They were perfectly capable of listening to one question and then reeling off a pompous hour-long speech, then dismissing the guest, his tea now cold in its china cup. But in the court the Party men were suddenly nonentities, tired men in bad suits. In the audience, they mumbled angrily during testimony they did not approve of, and, like Baptist parishioners, they barked agreement to urge on their compatriots at the lectern.

On a day when Nikolai Ryzhkov was testifying on his five years as Prime Minister under Gorbachev, I spent a two-hour afternoon recess with Ivan Polozkov, a Party chieftain from the southern Russian city of Krasnodar, who in 1990 had become the leader of the Russian Communist Party and Ligachev's successor as the conservative "dark prince." Before Polozkov came to Moscow, he had won a measure of fame in Krasnodar by waging war on coöperative businesses—that first wave of semi-capitalism, which Gorbachev unleashed in 1987. Declaring co-ops a "malignancy" on the socialist body politic, Polozkov closed down scores of restaurants, stores, and mercantile exchanges. "All they were trying to do was make money," Polozkov told me, appalled even now. "They had no social conscience."

At Central Committee meetings in 1990 and 1991, Polozkov had been openly critical of Gorbachev, but there had been something guarded about his speech. A glimmer of traditional Party discipline, and an instinct for self-preservation, had prevented him from saying the things he was saying now.

"I am free now. Free now to vent my spleen," he said. Like the other Party men who came to court every day, Polozkov operated on the fuel of resentment. He was, in his mind, a great man made small by the deceptions of Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

I asked him why he thought the Communist Party and the Soviet system had collapsed with such stunning speed after seeming to all the world to be unconquerable, a monolith of power and strength.

Polozkov's eyes widened, more in surprise than in anger. "They had so much and we—we had nothing!" he said.

"What do you mean?" I asked. "That the Communist Party had nothing and the opposition had everything?"

"Precisely," Polozkov said, with a satisfied little nod. "We know that the C.I.A. financed parties here. You gave them Japanese cameras, German copying machines, money—everything! You had your dissidents who worked for you—the liars, the diplomats, the military double agents. Gorbachev, Yakovlev, [Foreign Minister Eduard] Shevardnadze—these men were all yours, too. They were yours! Look at the book contracts they've got! Millions! One of our secretaries in the Russian Communist Party, Ivan Antonovich, was in the United States, and he was invited to speak at a conference. Shevardnadze was on the bill, too. Shevardnadze spoke first, and then he left. Then Antonovich spoke. Afterward, they gave him a souvenir—a copper coffee mug. Someone came up to him from our Embassy and said how unfair it was that Antonovich had got only a mug and he spoke in English, while Shevardnadze spoke in his bad Russian and got five thousand dollars.

"Look, I understand what it was all about. It was a confrontation of two systems. Reagan called us an evil empire, and other Western leaders were judged according to how anti-Soviet they could be. The putsch was just a culmination of this struggle. And I will admit this: so far, you have been winning this war. But I want to emphasize—*so far*. Remember this: Napoleon was in Moscow, but France did not defeat us. The Nazis were near Moscow, but look what happened. And I must tell you—and listen carefully—the war is still on, and in the end you will not be able to endure in this competition with Communism."

I asked Polozkov if he thought that Gorbachev was a paid traitor. He began nodding rapidly, crazily.

"Look," he said. "Who do you think

is on Gorbachev's level, historically speaking? What sort of stature do you think he has?"

I said that I'd just read an article in the French press comparing Gorbachev to Charles de Gaulle.

"What?" Polozkov barked. "How can you compare Gorbachev to de Gaulle? Pétain is more like it! He lies like Pétain! He betrayed his country like Pétain! De Gaulle did not bend low before Hitler the way Gorbachev did to the West. It's an insult to our people to compare Gorbachev to de Gaulle. Gorbachev fled the Party like a coward. For his first couple of years, Gorbachev did well. But then he began to travel. He was praised abroad. They celebrated him as a great leader, and this tickled his ambition. He lost a sense of who he was, where he came from. He became vain, always out for his own career. And then they gave a Nobel Prize to a man who destroyed his country with wars and collapse. They made a mockery of that prize."

After talking with Polozkov and several other Communist Party chieftains who came to the small courtroom every day to watch the proceedings, I was beginning to realize that these men had processed the August coup in their own minds first as tragedy and now as farce, and finally were so shaken by the way it changed the world that when they recovered from the shock of losing power they began to excuse the coup as a non-event. It simply never happened.

Vladimir Ivashko was typical: he called the coup "no coup at all." He had served the Party so long and so well, he had lived by its myths so thoroughly, that he could not and would not think of "the August days" as the study in betrayal and incompetence that they were. "I know these men who are in prison," he said of the coup leaders, during a court recess. "I know them as well as one man can know another. They are capable men, the top men in the Party. Honest men. Do you think they are fools? Yeltsin was never arrested. There were tanks, yes, but they never fired. People put flowers in the gun barrels. This is a coup? No, I am sorry. This was a drama, designed to crush the Communist Party and create bourgeois power in Russia.

"In the West, and even here, they try to say that the Communist Party was reactionary—that it was against change. Those in power—and I knew them all well—none of them were against change. The discussion was always about the pace of change, about the retention of the union. The members of the so-called putsch acted in the interests of a native power. To say they acted as opponents of reform is groundless. The Party kept this country together. Look at the Balkans, look at Ireland. Why were we able for so many years—until now—to avoid such conflict? Because there was unanimity from the top to the bottom. The tragedy of Gorbachev and of Yeltsin is that they destroyed the Party mechanisms but created nothing in their place. Nothing will take the place of the Party. Nothing. Never."

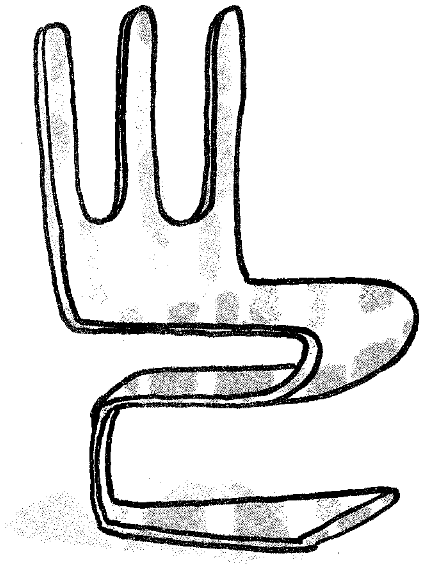
I spent the better part of two days watching both sides question Nikolai Ryzhkov, a politician so emotional and so prone to seeing events as personal slights that he was known in the press as "the weeping Bolshevik." In his years as Gorbachev's Prime Minister, Ryzhkov would choke up and splutter if members of the Supreme Soviet dared question his economic plans or his role in a weapons scandal. Unlike Ligachev or Polozkov, who affected the steely toughness of a regional Party boss, Ryzhkov displayed a touching vulnerability and a righteousness that were his last selling points before his popularity vanished completely, in late 1990. His memoir, "Perestroika: A History of Betrayals," is filled with venom toward Gorbachev.

Uncommonly slender and spry for a Party leader of his seniority, Ryzhkov, who is sixty-three, stood on the witness stand with a studied casualness, one hip cocked, one hand thrust in his pocket, as he answered the first, easy volleys from the Communist side. Then, as Makarov and Fedotov began to ask questions based on confidential Party documents, he bristled. He came to attention.

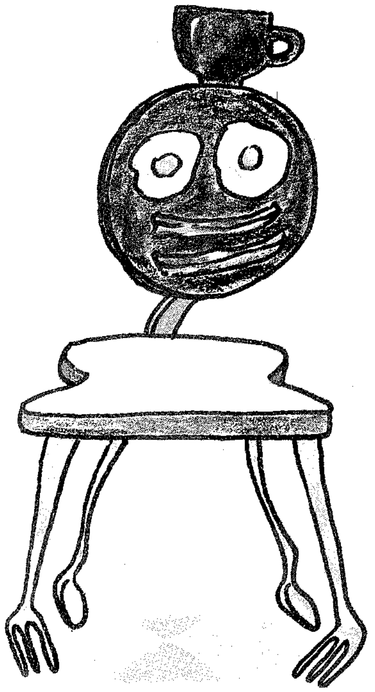
Makarov picked up one bound set of documents after another and seemed to mock Ryzhkov simply by the manner of his questioning. Makarov is possessed of an elephantine girth and the voice of a field mouse; somehow, this strange combination makes him seem skeptical, even sarcastic, with no effort at all. He

MILAN CHAIR HARVEST

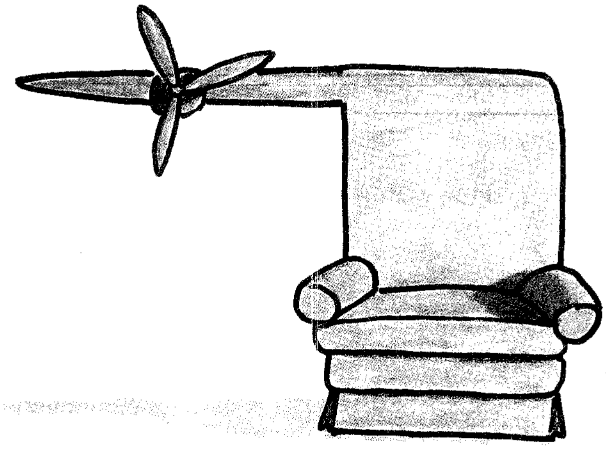
by Michael Crawford



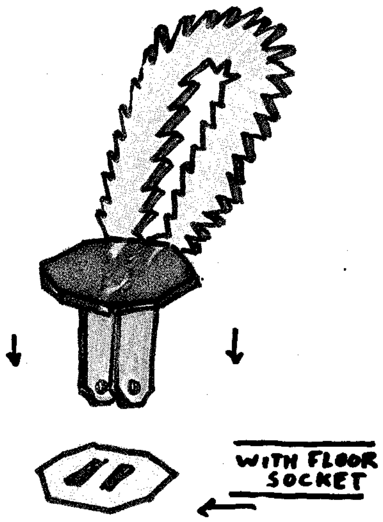
GIANNI TATTI'S DINING-ROOM CHAIR



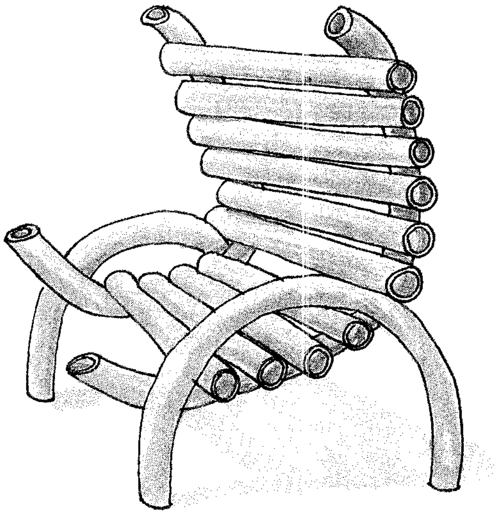
BEPPE LUGANO'S BREAKFAST CHAIR



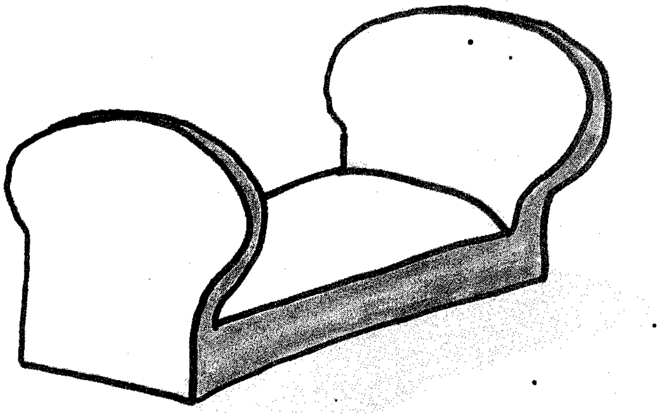
SYLVIA DAMMI'S WING CHAIR


WITH FLOOR SOCKET

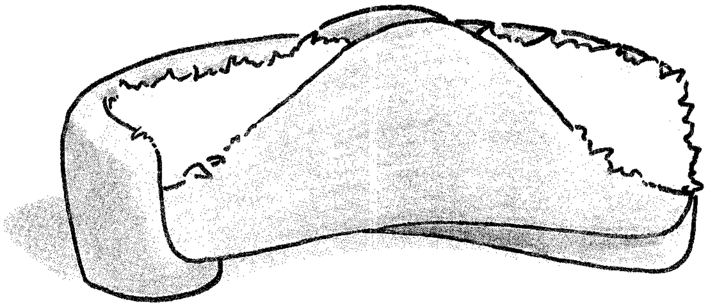
RICO PAZZOLINI'S ELECTRIC CHAIR



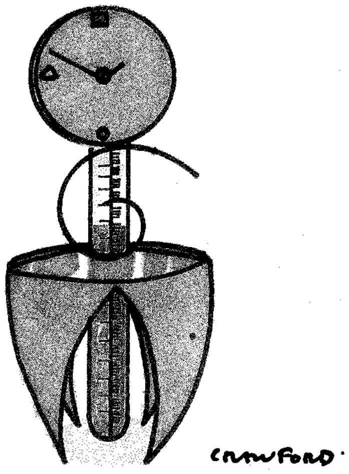
CARLO BING'S PENNE LOUNGE CHAIR



ETTORE UZZA'S HALF-A-LOAF LOVE SEAT



LUCA BAROCCO'S CANNOLI SECTIONAL



CINZIA BAFFI'S TIME-AND-TEMP CHAIR

needs only to open his tiny, Cupid's-bow mouth.

Respected witness, he would say, here is a document describing secret arms sales to foreign Communist Parties using government moneys. Here is another, specifically setting out the plan to cover up the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. Here the Politburo allocates money to "education." Do political parties usually have educational systems? Respected witness, respected Nikolai Ivanovich, the C.P.S.U. supported left-wing parties in capitalist, developed countries. Does that mean we gave succor to capitalist, developed countries? To what end?

For a long time, Ryzhkov kept his cool and deflected painful questions about the past by saying, "That was then" and "The Party was in the process of reform."

Makarov asked, "Why did the Party, even after it relinquished its guarantee of power, in 1990—why did it continue to control the government and virtually run public life? Does that indicate to you constitutional, legal behavior?"

Finally, Ryzhkov lost his temper. "I protest these questions," he said. "You are asking me questions as if I were a criminal. . . . You are trying to paint me into a corner!"

Ryzhkov's image, that of the reasonable moderate surrounded by reactionaries like Polozkov and unconscionable radicals like Gorbachev and Yakovlev, began to appear ridiculous. When transcripts were read to him demonstrating how he voted for one pernicious measure after another, his explanations were weak and absurd.

"Many times I spoke out against a measure," he said, "but when I found myself alone or in the minority I voted for it."

Chief Justice Zorkin tried always to keep the proceedings above emotion and raw political battle, but the effort was doomed. After Makarov squeaked into his microphone the proceedings of yet another Politburo meeting that the Communist Party had never imagined would be read aloud, Ryzhkov snapped.

"Secrets are secrets," he said. "One day soon, we'll realize that. There were always secrets! Try and make an American turn himself inside out for you!"

At one point, Makarov swung his bulk in Ryzhkov's direction and said he "worried" whether the "respected Nikolai Ivanovich" wasn't tired.

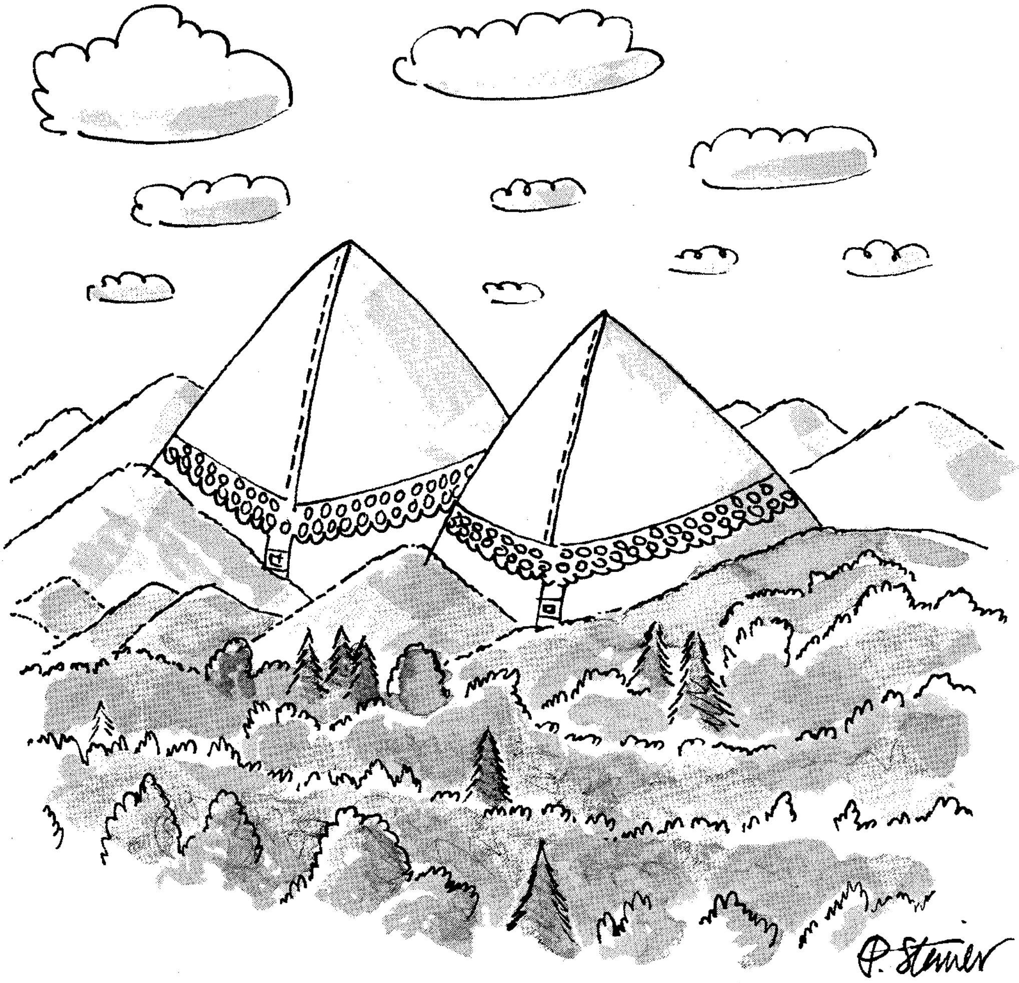
"You don't have the figure for worrying," the former Prime Minister said. "You shouldn't worry."

"Well," the lawyer huffed. "At least, I don't cry."

One night after a long court session, I accepted an invitation from Shakhrai's team to follow its members out to their "work dacha," at a government compound in the village of Arkhangelskoye. The compound is one of the Russian government's many spoils of victory. Although most former members of the Communist Party leadership are still living in relative splendor even as they plead poverty in court and on television, most of the booty—the vacation homes, the resorts, the limousines—is now in the hands of the state. Yeltsin made his name by mocking the privileges of the Party powerful, but he is now doing a fairly good imitation of Louis XIV. Gorbachev's old arrangement of a cortège of three Zil limousines did not suffice; Yeltsin travels in a fleet of three or four Mercedes-Benz sedans.

A high gate, a surveillance camera, and an armed guard marked the entrance to the compound. Shakhrai himself was in Austria that day—"buying himself a dacha in Salzburg, no doubt," one of the Party lawyers had cracked—and Fedotov and Makarov had a long night ahead of them preparing for the next witness, Yegor Ligachev.

Fedotov, whose reddish beard and bald pate earned him the nickname Lenin among his friends, grew up in what he called dissident circles. In the early nineteen-sixties, he attended public readings of banned poetry in Pushkin and Mayakovsky Squares;



THE GRAND TETONS EN BUSTIER

for his trouble, he was expelled for a while from his university. Fedotov is now the Russian government's administrator of "intellectual property," presiding over the country's copyright bureaucracy.

If Fedotov was the earnest intellectual of the team, Makarov was its rogue. In 1988, he defended Leonid Brezhnev's son-in-law, Yuri Churbanov. After his marriage to Brezhnev's daughter, Churbanov had won a high-ranking post in the Interior Ministry police, a job he rather quickly exploited for its bribe-taking possibilities. While on a trip to Uzbekistan, he accepted a suitcase stuffed with tens of thousands of rubles. Makarov won high marks for his defense, but there was not much he could do for a son-in-law who was on trial as much for his relationship to a family in disgrace as for his hunger for gold.

Fedotov led the way into Dacha No. 6—the cabin where Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's advisers tried to hammer out the "500 Days" economic package in 1990, before it was abandoned. While dinner was being prepared, Makarov and Fedotov escorted me into a small study. A desk was stacked high with folders, many of them red and marked "Materials of the Politburo."

"We have to meet for a while," Makarov said. "Why don't you sit down and help yourself?"

The hors d'oeuvres he offered were several short stacks of some of the most closely guarded secrets of the nineteen-seventies and eighties in the Soviet Union.

"We've got about eighty thousand documents," Fedotov said. "Now there's only around forty million more to go."

"Oh, before we leave you with these things, you might want to hear our performance of the Politburo meeting of August 29, 1985," Makarov said.

The two men began laughing in anticipation, and like an old radio team—Bob and Ray coming to you live from Dacha No. 6—they delivered their script, reading from a document marked "Top Secret, Sole Copy." Makarov read Gorbachev's lines, giving them a fair approximation of Gorbachev's southern accent and grammatical flubs, and Fedotov read the remaining parts. The document was even more fascinating than its bizarre performance.

At that session, the members of the Politburo had discussed their strategy options regarding Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner, who were still living in forced internal exile in the closed city of Gorky. (Its name has since been changed back to the original, Nizhny Novgorod.)

Gorbachev says that the Politburo has received letters from the Sakharovs and from elsewhere asking that Bonner be allowed to go abroad for medical treatment.

Viktor Chebrikov, the chief of the K.G.B., dominates the discussion, and informs the other members of the Politburo that Sakharov "is not in excellent health and now is receiving an oncological exam because he is losing weight." He fails to mention that Sakharov's weight loss was due to a hunger strike, which was followed by a K.G.B. attempt to cram a tube down his throat and "feed" him.

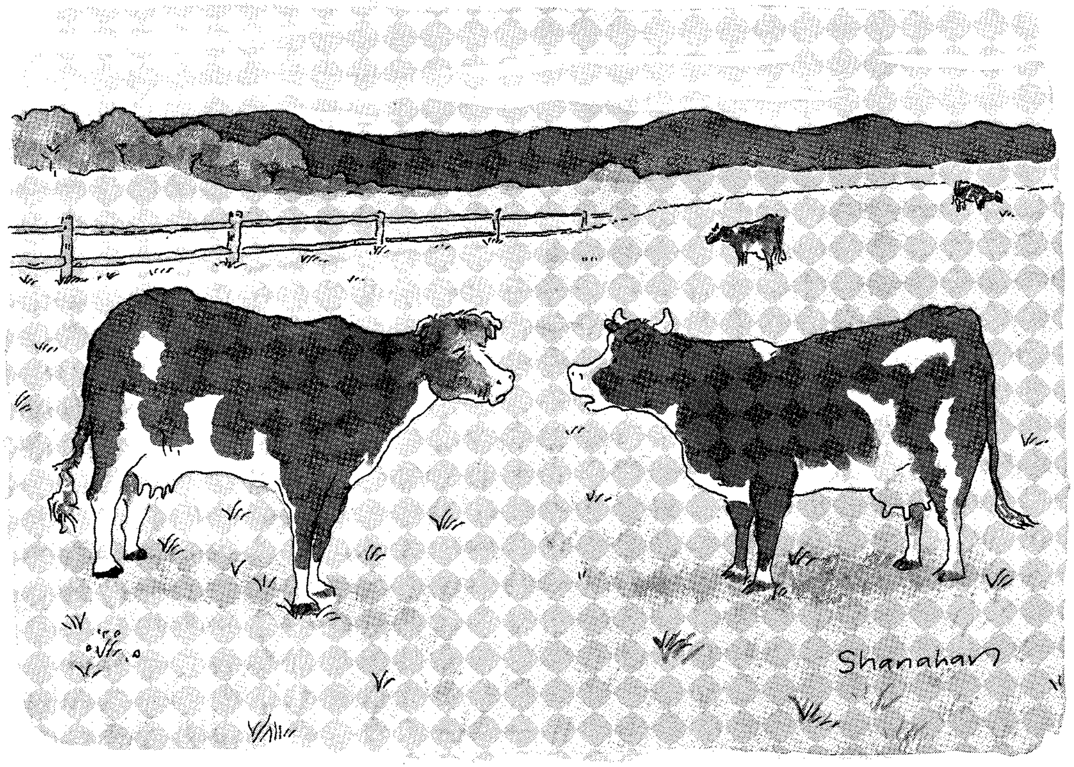
Another participant, Mikhail Zimyanin, warns, "No decency can be expected of Bonner. She is a beast in a skirt who was appointed by imperialism." They are clearly worried that Bonner, who is part Jewish, will plead the case for emigration and human rights while she is in the West. Chebrikov cautions that if they allow Bonner to go to the West for treatment "she may make statements and get awards," adding, "But it would look like an act of humanism. . . . Sakharov's behavior is under the huge influence of Bonner and he is always subject to that. . . ."

Gorbachev says, "Well, that's what Zionism is!"

Makarov and Fedotov collapsed in laughter.

Later, over a dinner of broiled chicken and rice, Fedotov said that the two of them spend hours reading the documents, and are alternately stunned and amused at the banality of the Soviet leaders. Makarov said he hoped that the theatres of Moscow would soon stage the old sessions of the Politburo, using the transcripts as scripts.

"When we read these absurd documents, we laugh ourselves all the way to the floor," Fedotov said. "But that is only when we are not crushed and despondent. Recently, I read a Central Committee document from 1937 that said that the Voronezh secret police, accord-



"Have you spoken to an herbalist?"

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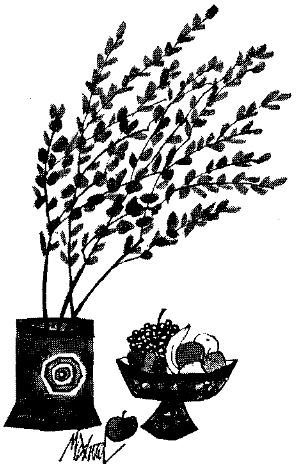
ing to the 'regional plan,' repressed in the 'first category' nine thousand people—which means these people were executed. And for no reason, of course. Twenty-nine thousand were repressed in the 'second category'—meaning they were sent to labor camps. The local First Secretary, however, wrote that there were still more Trotskyites and kulaks who remained 'unrepressed.' He was saying that the plan was fulfilled but the plan was not enough. And so he asked that it be increased by eight thousand. Stalin wrote back, 'No, increase by *nine* thousand!' The sickness of it! It's as if they were playing poker."

"It's true," Makarov said. "Later, we read a document from Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky giving instructions to his men, saying, 'If you meet a person on the street and he fails to identify himself immediately, shoot him!' This is 1921, not the Stalin era. See, the thing to remember about the documents is not the sensations they provide. It's their routineness, their banality, the way these very ordinary directives ordered the life of the country."

After dinner, I sat at the desk once more, leafing through documents that until now had been considered "eyes only": K.G.B. analyses of a school of writers in 1970 known as SMOG; a list of Western correspondents and dissidents at a rally in Pushkin Square on December 5, 1975; copies of private letters sent by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and intercepted by the K.G.B.; a K.G.B. dossier on the creation in Krasnodar, at School No. 3, of an eighth-grade "Club for the Struggle for Democracy"; minutes of a September, 1986, Politburo meeting at which the K.G.B. chief, Chebrikov, says that while political prisoners will be released, "they will be watched . . . in connection with prophylactic work"; an analysis by Brezhnev's ideologist, Mikhail Suslov, of Sakharov's first underground essays, which says, "To read this is to become nauseated."



The minutes of a July 12, 1984, Politburo session reveal a truly nauseating spectacle: the leaders of the Party still defending Stalin against Khrushchev's revisionism. At the meeting, the members listen to a report on how Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin's Foreign Minister, was "overwhelmed with joy" at the Politburo's decision to restore him to the Party ranks. Molotov had been expelled during Khrushchev's "thaw."

"And let me tell you," Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, the head of the armed forces, says. "If it hadn't been for Khrushchev, they never would have been expelled and there never would have been these outrageous actions regarding Stalin. . . . Not a single one of our enemies has inflicted so much misfortune on us as Khrushchev did regarding his policies and his attitude toward Stalin."

Gorbachev, who knew well at the time that he would have to get the support of the conservatives to win the top job once Konstantin Chernenko finally died, plays a marvellous game at this same session, saying that he will support the restoration to Party ranks of Molotov's cohorts Lazar Kaganovich and Georgy Malenkov.

"Yes, these are elderly people," the Leningrad Party boss, Grigory Romanov, chimes in. "They may die."

But Gorbachev also knows the value of discretion. As for the Molotov rehabilitation, he says, "I think we can do without publicity."

Ustinov gets so excited at this little neo-Stalinist wave that he says, "Shouldn't we rename Volgograd back to Stalingrad?"

"Well," Gorbachev says, "there are pluses and minuses to this."

Even after Chernenko's death and his own assumption of power, Gorbachev offered a few bones for his reactionary colleagues to gnaw on. At a March 20, 1986, Politburo meeting, he suggests changing the name of the icebreaker ship Arktika to Brezhnev.

"Yes, let's do it," Ryzhkov says. "But don't announce it on television."

FINALLY, I lingered over a document that Sovietologists have long been waiting to see: the transcript of the March 11, 1985, Politburo meeting, at which Gorbachev was made General Secretary. For years, there had been speculation that it was a close vote—that the chief of the Moscow Party organization, the hard-liner Viktor Grishin, challenged Gorbachev, and if it had not been for the absence of one or two conservative voters Grishin might have won. The former Politburo members Geidar Aliyev, Yegor Ligachev, and Aleksandr Yakovlev, and Grishin himself, in a brief phone conversation before his death, told me that it was untrue—that the vote had been unanimous. But that was never good enough for Sovietology.

Gorbachev opens the fateful meeting with the announcement of Chernenko's death, and Yevgeny Chazov, the Minister of Health, gives a detailed description of Chernenko's illnesses and final hours. Then, in a move that stuns some of the conservatives, Andrei Gromyko, a top official under every Soviet leader since Stalin, stands up at his place at the table and nominates Gorbachev. First, he provides some ritual words of praise for Chernenko's "historical optimism" and the general "rightness of our theory and practice." Then, in nominating Gorbachev, the baby of the Politburo, Gromyko pays tribute to his man's "indomitable creative energy" and "attention to people," and goes on, "When we look into the future—and for many of us this is hard—we have no right to let the world see a single fissure in our relations. There is more than enough speculation on this abroad."

Grishin, for his part, says, "When we heard yesterday about the death of Konstantin Ustinovich, we predetermined to some extent this issue"—of the new leadership—"when we arranged to approve Mikhail Sergeyevich chairman of the funeral commission." Grishin, who has worked with the Party ideologist and *Kommunist* editor Richard Kosolapov to devise a program for election, is clearly not thrilled that behind-the-scenes maneuvering has left him powerless. But he does not challenge Gorbachev; instead, he sings his praises just as loudly as the rest.

Finally, Gorbachev gets up to speak. His performance, even on the page, is worthy of Machiavelli's demands for a would-be prince. "Our economy needs more dynamism," he says. "This dynamism is needed for the development of our foreign policy. I take all your words with a sense of tremendous excitement and emotion. It is with this sense that I am listening to you, my dear friends. We do not need to change policy. It is correct and it is true. It is genuine Leninist politics. We need, however, to speed up, to move forward, to disclose shortcomings and overcome them and realize our shining future. . . . I assure you I will do everything to justify the trust of the Party." Then he announces a plenum of the Central Committee in half an hour at which the leadership question will be "resolved."

Thus was the last General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party elected—with, as the old newspapers would add in parentheses, "prolonged and thunderous applause."

"Like a lot of people, we overshuttered in the eighties."

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EVEN after Mikhail Gorbachev returned from captivity to Moscow after the failure of the August coup, he defended the Communist Party. He was its progeny, its protector, and he would neither abandon nor kill it. At his first press conference after the putsch, he spoke earnestly about his allegiance to the "socialist choice" and the Party's "renewal." He told all who would listen that he had returned to a "different country," but he did not seem to know what that meant.

Gorbachev's closest adviser, Aleksandr Yakovlev, who was known as the intellectual architect of reform, grew furious as he watched that mystifying session with the press. In a confidential memo written in December of 1985, Yakovlev had urged Gorbachev to split the Party into conservative and reformist factions and begin the process of creating a multiparty system. For years, Yakovlev had prodded Gorbachev to abandon the hidebound *nomenklatura* and join forces with the urban intelligentsia, with the pro-independence forces in the Baltic states—with all those who actually sought a transformation of the old order. But Gorbachev had refused, insisting that the Party had "begun *perestroika* and would lead it." Even now, after falling victim to a putsch, Gorbachev ignored what was right and necessary.

"You have given the worst press conference of your career," Yakovlev told Gorbachev privately. "The Party is dead. Why can't you see that? Talk about its renewal is senseless. It's like offering first aid to a corpse."

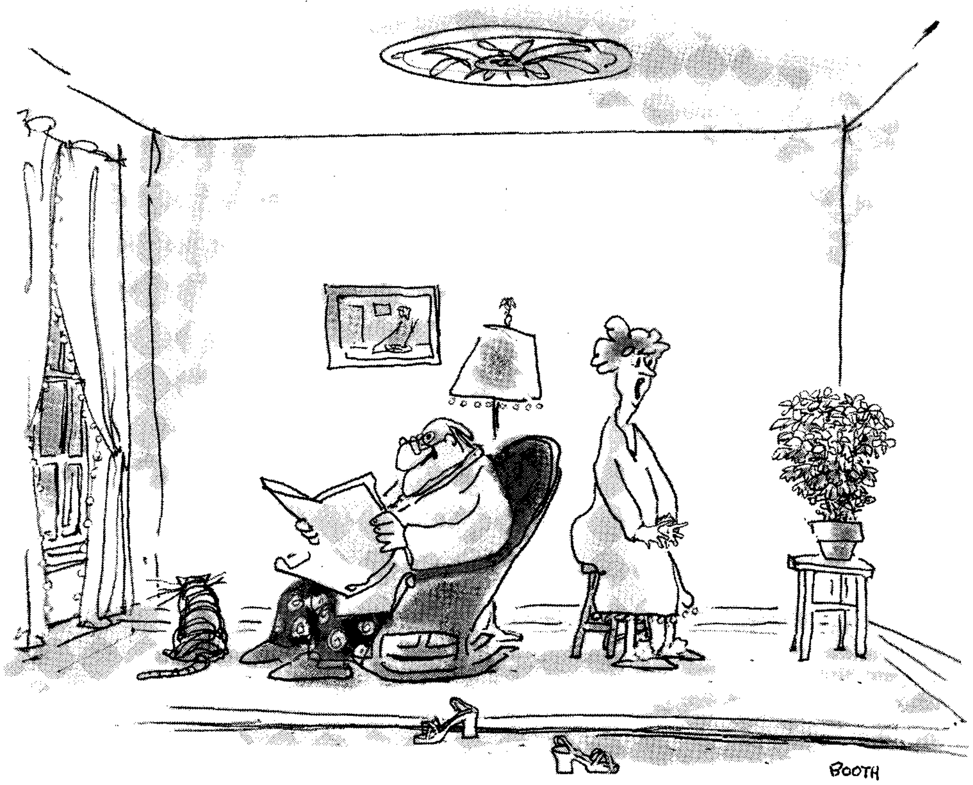
Unlike Yakovlev, Boris Yeltsin did not cater to the sensibilities of Mikhail Gorbachev. Their personal battle had gone on for so long and contained so many seriocomic incidents that the two men seemed paired in eternal tension and dependence. Yin and yang. Punch and Judy. On August 23rd, at a raucous session of the Russian parliament, Yeltsin clearly had the upper hand, and he used it to flay and humiliate his opponent. He forced Gorbachev to read aloud a transcript of the August 19th Council of Ministers meeting, at which all but two of the ministers whom Gorbachev himself had nominated pledged their hearty support of the coup.

Gorbachev was looking small and weak, but Yeltsin was not finished. "And now, on a lighter note," he said with a jack-o'-lantern grin, "shall we now sign a decree suspending the activities of the Russian Communist Party?"

"What are you doing?" Gorbachev stammered. "I— Haven't we— I haven't read this—"

But it was too late. Gorbachev was powerless. And on August 24th he resigned as General Secretary of the Communist Party, dissolved its Central Committee, and declared, in essence, an end to the Bolshevik era.

THE morning after my trip to Arkhangelskoye, I went to court to hear the testimony of Yegor Ligachev, once the second most powerful man in the country under Gorbachev. In power, "he was like a locomotive," Ryzhkov had recalled, and he certainly looked fit even now. Ligachev had just published a memoir called "Zagadka Gorbacheva" ("The Enigma of Gorbachev"), in which he laid out the conservative case against the last General Secretary. Gorbachev, he wrote, "began well," with a gradualist program, but then fell victim to international acclaim, vanity, and the duplicity of the "extremists" in his midst. And, instead of reforming the system, Gorbachev started on the road to "anti-socialist" thinking. Ligachev tried in his testimony, as he had in his memoir, to portray himself as the last honest man, victimized by endless conspiracies to destroy him and the socialist state. He was



"Martha Washington has whitefly."

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never an "opponent of *perestroika*," as he has been portrayed in the press in Russia and abroad, but merely an advocate of gradual change.

The Communist lawyers were eager for Ligachev to feel comfortable, and lobbed him a few easy leading questions to fuel his soliloquy. The government lawyers were not nearly so accommodating. For their part, they insisted on knowing Ligachev's reaction to a raft of Politburo and Central Committee decisions during his years in power. Once more, Makarov read through the documents.

Respected Yegor Kuzmich, he would say, what of this document dated November 1, 1989, in which the Politburo approves the funding for the construction of a rec room for the Afghan leader and his family? And what of this document you drew up dictating to the press the rules for the coverage of the war in Afghanistan: "There will be not more than one report of a death or wound per month among Soviet servicemen"?

And what of this document in which the Politburo approves of the creation of a news bureau for *Komsomolskaya Pravda* in Canada and stipulates that the resident correspondent be an officer of the K.G.B.?

"What of it?" Ligachev said. "This is a practice broadly carried out by other countries."

And what of the 1991 Politburo decision to create a special military unit of the K.G.B. manned by people "infinitely loyal to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the socialist motherland"? Isn't it curious that the Party, which had allegedly relinquished the one-party system, could still dictate such a policy to a government ministry?

"Well, I am sure there was no ill will intended," Ligachev said.

And what of this document, esteemed Yegor Kuzmich—a Politburo session on March 24, 1987, at which the members agree that permissions given for business trips abroad must be tightened up, because, they say, "we regret that only professional competence is being taken into account, and not political concerns"?

"What's wrong with that?" he answered. "That just means that we were not indifferent to how people behaved abroad—moral factors included."

Finally, after a long day on the witness stand, Ligachev began to show flashes of why he had been feared by the hundreds of men and women working in the Central Committee apparatus. For years, he had been the one asking the tough questions, not answering them, and now he, like Ryzhkov, snapped.

"Look," he said. "If we'd taken decisive measures at the beginning, this country would not be on fire, as it is today! This war is not only close to Russia, it is entering our own homes. It is here! . . . Mikhail Sergeyevich took decisions only when every last citizen in the country knew they were necessary, when every last apple had ripened and fallen from the tree!"

AFTER a few days of listening to the testimony at the Constitutional Court, I found it remarkable that there was hardly any interest in the proceedings among the public. The spectators' gallery was virtually empty, and some days there were no more than five or six journalists around. Nearly all the regulars—the true court buffs—were themselves dinosaurs of the Communist Party.

For practically everyone else, the struggles and pleasures of the present day were of far greater concern, because Moscow, little more than a year after the coup, had become a phantasmagoria, a post-Communist world as it might have been painted by Hieronymus Bosch. Younger Muscovites, especially, seemed determined to rush headlong into some weird, pleasurable, vulgar world of primitive capitalism. As throughout Russian history, the new economy had bounded from one stage of development to the next, slipping quickly from complete deficit to sensual indulgence, and never stopping to solve the mundane problems of subsistence, structure, and property. In the subway stations and the kiosks, you could buy a lace tablecloth, a bottle of curaçao, Wrigley's Spearmint gum, Mars bars, a Public Enemy tape, Swiss chocolate, plastic "marital toys," a Mercedes-Benz hood ornament, American cigarettes, and Estonian pornography.

In the alleyways and the restaurants, Moscow was beginning to look like the set of "Once Upon a Time in America." As the Communist Party's old mafia structures have withered, more conventional ones have taken their place. The city is awash with twenty-five-year-old men wearing slick suits and black shirts and announcing their occupation as "a little buying, a little selling." Their molls dress in Lycra and fox. A kiosk owner's failure to pay his weekly protection money will leave him with a kiosk reduced to sticks and broken glass.

As hyperinflation drives the ruble into irrelevance, a system of financial apartheid has arrived. The dollar, suffering everywhere else, is supreme in Russia. Every day, American business executives arrive at Sheremetyevo Airport, toting their briefcases like pickaxes and pans, hoping they have found the new Klondike. In the meantime, they are also the new colonizers, hiring servants and snapping up Russian antiques for a song. In the House on the Embankment—the swank home of the *nomenklatura* half a century ago—the former apartment of Stalin's chief executioner is now occupied, the rumor goes, by the top executive of Russian McDonald's.

Among the people, there is no nostalgia or reverence for the old dogma. At the biggest bookstore in the city, the House of Books, I saw a weary salesclerk using a stack of the "Collected Works" of V. I. Lenin as a stool while she handed out copies of the latest editions of Agatha Christie and Arthur Hailey. Moscow is a city of disorientation—so discontented that you can easily take a wrong turn into the nineteenth century. A former journalist named Vadim Dormidontov sits in an office at Moscow City Hall and decides which streets and neighborhoods will lose their Soviet-era names and regain their old ones. Lenin Hills is Sparrow Hills once more. The residents of Ustinov Boulevard again live on Autumn Boulevard.

While nearly everyone is trying to get his bearings in this strange new world, Yeltsin has been struggling with a hard-line opposition more than willing to exploit the collapse of the economy for its own political gain. The coalition of conservatives is often known as the "red and browns," meaning that it is an alliance of former Communist Party bosses and ultra-nationalists, even neo-Fascists. For Yeltsin, the trial is a critical front in the battle to stave off the reactionaries. "The so-called red-and-brown forces are advancing," he said on the eve of the trial. "I would say that today Russia's destiny depends on the Constitutional Court rather than on the President. . . . Any support for the Communists may play into their hands and promote their destructive activity, which may push us into a civil war."

In Moscow now, hardly any politician dares to refer to himself as a "democrat," for fear of appearing too Western, too liberal, incompetent. Some of the leaders of the radical reform movement are trying to expand their political appeal by playing, however cautiously, the nationalist card. Sergei Stankevich, a young adviser to Yeltsin, began his political career in 1989 as a radical democrat and refers to himself now as a statist democrat. He wants a little nationalist shading to expand his political base. Yeltsin, too, has had to emphasize his "national feeling," becoming fast friends with the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church and refusing to complete a deal with the Japanese on the Kuril Islands. Yeltsin realizes that it is hard for Russians to lose all the time—lose territory, power, influence—and count the losses as victory.

But the radical right is not impressed by Yeltsin's guile. He is considered the chief culprit in the fracturing of the Soviet state and of Russia itself. Yuri Afanasyev, a historian and a deputy in the Russian parliament, told me he thought that the current Russian scene was one of dangerous flux. "The old system will never regain its shape, but all kinds of possibilities exist for the future of Russia," he said. "We could look like South Korea or, say, like Latin America with a taint of Sicily. It is a far from sure thing that we will resemble the developed Western democracies. The pull of the state sector, the authoritarian tug, is

ART FORUM
Benoît

still a very dangerous thing. Fascism, a kind of national socialism, is a major threat. And it is finding supporters not only in the lunatic fringe but also in the alleged center. The consciousness of the Russian has always had the drawback of yearning for expansion and resisting contraction. Unfortunately, the history of Russia is the history of growth. This is a powerful image in the Russian soul: the idea of breadth as wealth—the more, the better. But the truth is that endless expansion has always depleted Russian power and wealth. Berdyayev was right when he said that Russia was always crippled by its expanse."

To some degree, the Communist Party's mythmaking machinery has been replaced by a Russian nostalgia for a pre-revolutionary utopia that never was. Stanislav Govorukhin's recent film "The Russia We Lost" portrays the last czar—previously presented as a dolt and a weakling in Communist propaganda—as a man of great learning, military skill, and compassion. Lenin is a "slit eyed" fanatic with "pathological obsessions" and, naturally, Jewish forebears. Govorukhin recently told the newspaper *Megapolis-Express* that if there were to be another coup he would not rush to the White House to defend the popularly elected government, as he had in August of 1991. "Following a totalitarian regime, a sea of democracy and freedom is the sure-fire path to Fascism," he said. His credo now is the famous declaration of the czarist reformer Pyotr Stolypin to the Russian duma: "You want great upheavals, but what we need is a great Russia."

Although there were only half a dozen people in the Moskva movie theatre when I went to see "The Russia We Lost," and although opinion polls do not indicate some deep public longing for an overthrow of the Yeltsin government, Moscow seems filled now with demagogues who would be czar. The first to appear on the scene was Vladimir Zhirinovsky, an unabashed neo-Fascist who won six million votes—almost eight per cent of the electorate—in June of 1991, when he ran against Yeltsin and four other candidates for the Russian Presidency. Just after the coup, I watched Zhirinovsky deliver two hour-long monologues to clumps of fascinated deputies in the corridors of the Kremlin during a parliamentary session. He rambled on, picking up so much speed as he described his imperial ambitions that he showered his listeners, and the television cameras, with little sprays of spit.

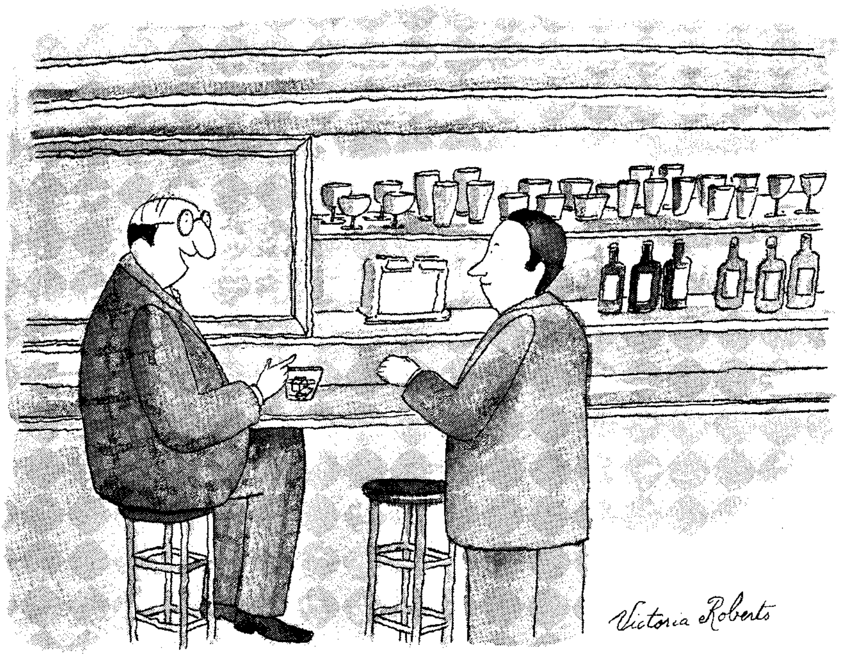
"I'll start by squeezing the Baltics and other small nations," he said. "I don't care if they are recognized by the U.N. I'm not going to invade them or anything. I'll bury radioactive waste along the Lithuanian border and put up powerful fans and blow the stuff across the border at night. I'll turn the fans off during the day. They'll all get radiation sickness. They'll die of it. When they either die out or get down on their knees, I'll stop it. I'm a dictator. What I'm going to do is bad, but it'll be good for Russia. The Slavs are going to get anything they want if I'm elected.

"I will send troops to Afghanistan again, and this time they'll win. I will restore the foreign policy of the czars. I won't make Russians fight. I'll make Uzbeks and Tajiks do the fighting. Russian officers will just give the orders. Like Napoleon. 'Uzbeks, forward to Kabul!' And when the Uzbeks are all dead it'll be 'Tajiks, forward to Kabul!' The Bashkirs can go to Mongolia, where there's t.b. and syphilis. The other republics will be Russia's kitchen garden. Russia will be the brains.

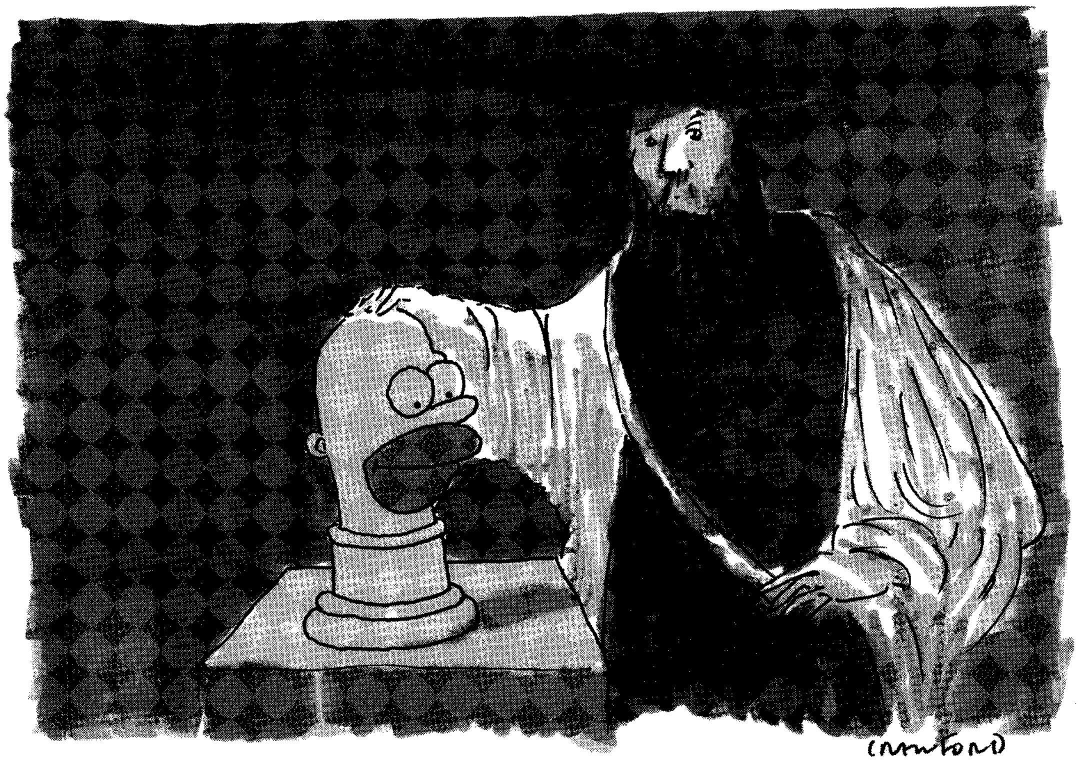
"I say it quite plainly: when I come to power, there will be a dictatorship. I will beat the Americans in space. I will surround the planet with our space stations so that they'll be scared of our space weapons. I don't care if they call me a Fascist or a Nazi. Workers in Leningrad told me, 'Even if you wear five swastikas, we'll vote for you all the same. You promise a clear plan.' There's nothing like fear to make people work better. The stick, not the carrot. I'll do it all without tanks on the streets. Those who have to be arrested will be arrested quietly at night. I may have to shoot a hundred thousand people, but the three hundred million others will live peacefully. I have the right to shoot these hundred thousand. I have this right as President."

Despite his surprisingly strong showing in the last Russian Presidential race, the vast majority of people think Zhirinovsky to be either mad or an agent of the secret police, or both. But he is not alone in his extremism. Aleksandr Sterligov, a former K.G.B. general who promises "the iron hand," is only the latest in a collection of would-be dictators who are hoping that the public will grow so disenchanted with the Yeltsin government that it will turn to them.

One afternoon, I visited the grungy editorial offices of *Dyen*, the newspaper that is now the leading voice of the hard-right coalition. Just weeks before the August coup, *Dyen* had published the now infamous "Word to the People," a front-page appeal for a military seizure of power. General Boris Gromov, who signed the appeal, was the last Soviet commander in Afghanistan



"I'm facing my fears in alphabetical order. How about you?"



ARISTOTLE WITH A BUST OF HOMER

• •

and is currently the Deputy Minister of Defense. I met with the author of the appeal, Aleksandr Prokhanov, who is the paper's editor, and with Vladimir Bondarenko, his deputy. Bondarenko told me he had just returned from the United States—a trip, he said, that was sponsored in part by David Duke, the former Nazi and Ku Klux Klansman.

"Perhaps Duke's views are a bit extreme," Bondarenko conceded. "I suppose my views are better compared to those of your Patrick Buchanan."

We talked a long time about the coup, and here, too, the conservatives spoke of it as a shadow play, something that was not what it seemed.

"When people heard about the putsch, most of them said, 'Finally, at last, they are doing what they have to do,' " Bondarenko told me. "They did not believe in terror, but they wanted elementary order, the sort of order that states have everywhere. But the leaders of the coup were so stupid. They are to be condemned not because they pulled off a coup but because they did it so stupidly."

Prokhanov, a performance artist of the right wing, made Bondarenko seem almost rational.

"You did it!" he said, pointing at me as the representative American. "You did it! And how do I know? I have friends at Langley, at the State Department, and at the Rand Corporation. The general concept was yours—the C.I.A.'s. I am sure of it. The process was regulated and designed by your people. The so-called leaders of the coup were pushed forward and then betrayed. They were left to be torn to pieces by public opinion. They were so stupid to have believed Gorbachev.

"In this whole drama, only the C.I.A. was smart. They alone knew that the Soviet Union would fall apart under the concept of republican sovereignty—an idea they planted in the Baltics and then elsewhere. Do you think East Germany fell apart on its own? Do you think Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and, finally, the Soviet Union fell apart on their own? The plan of struggle against the Soviet Union has existed ever since the Second World War."

Prokhanov said he had been "elated" on the first morning of the coup and "disgusted" when it collapsed three days later. But he said he was sure that his time would come again. "After a year in which the government has lost trust and the democrats are in a state of collapse, the patriots from the left and the right will come together and the war will continue. And it will be, I assure you, an anti-American movement. There are three ways we can come to power—and we will use any means to do it. First, we can do it in parliament. Second, there can be a split within the government in which the liberals lose the support of the Army—the new K.G.B.—and there is a gradual drift to the right. Or we can do it through extra-governmental means—strikes, demonstrations, general chaos. In any case, the Yeltsin people should not relax."

THE trial shoved ahead. Interest dwindled even further. "Society is sick of history," Arseny Roginsky, of the Memorial historical society, told me. "It is too much with us. For people trying to cope with crazy inflation and adjusting to a new economy in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, it's a natural psychological situation. People do have some sense that their current troubles are tied to the history of the Party, but it is not always easy to step back and see that."

The only aspect of the trial that was grabbing any space in the newspapers and on the evening news was the question of Mikhail Gorbachev's refusal to testify. Chief Justice Zorkin had maintained from the start that because Gorbachev was General Secretary of the Party from March of 1985 until August of 1991 his testimony was essential. In Zorkin's summons, however, Gorbachev saw only the hand of Boris Yeltsin and another attempt to humiliate him. The two men had been playing out their opera of rivalry and unconscious coöperation for so long that Muscovites had wearied of it many months ago. After Gorbachev resigned, he received from Yeltsin a dacha, bodyguards, a pension, and a fine piece of real estate—a former Party institute on Leningrad

Prospect. Gorbachev said he would use the institute as a base for research, not for political opposition. But the relationship, such as it was, collapsed quickly. Gorbachev began accusing Yeltsin of running a government not dissimilar to "an insane asylum," and Yeltsin's aides began chipping away at Gorbachev's retirement deal, first taking away his limousine and replacing it with a modest sedan, and then threatening worse. "Soon, Mikhail Sergeyevich will be going to work on a bicycle," one newspaper said.

I went to see Gorbachev at his institute one afternoon, and hoped to talk about many things besides the trial and the furor over his refusal to testify. There was no chance of that. He was on the phone when I went into his office, and was obviously talking about the trial. He had already been fined a hundred rubles by the court—around thirty cents at the time—and he knew well that more serious sanctions were on the way. After he greeted me, he plopped himself down into an armchair, saying with false cheer, "They are running around like mad. They all got into this shit, and they don't know what to do now."

Gorbachev was furious, obsessed. I asked a question, and he finished his answer forty minutes later—an answer that was part set piece, part harangue. I had spent many hours listening to Gorbachev at press conferences, summits, interviews, and meetings, and he was never one for concision. But now he seemed at times like Lear, raging about plots against his underappreciated self. He truly believed that the court's summons amounted to political persecution of the most heinous sort.

MAILBOX

To The Editor:

Possibly you've been besieged by readers seeking the meaning of the mystifying rectangular configuration in the background of the portrait of Malcolm X on your October 12th cover. Some of my friends thought it was perhaps a skyscraper or a missile. Sad to say, I recognized it as a historical illustration of how slaves were packed into ships' holds on their months-long journey from Africa.

MAX GREEN
Jamesburg, N.J.

"Even Stalin's sick mind could not have dreamed up anything like this," Gorbachev said. "To declare that eighteen million Communists be deprived of their citizenship and swept away! Not just simply to deprive them but to sweep them away with a broom. And, with their families, we are talking about fifty to seventy million people. Only a lunatic would do this. If you call yourselves democrats, prove it with your deeds. Gorbachev had enough courage always to tell the truth to everyone and endure the pressure. I've got plenty of courage, and even now I will not yield.

"What is this, a Constitutional Court? There is no court in the world that can judge history! It is up to history proper to judge history. Historians, scholars, and so on . . . Will the court go all the way back to the October Revolution, to the Bolsheviks, or even earlier? Will they anathematize it all? Is this the business of the Constitutional Court? Let's analyze what Lenin did to take power. Does this mean that all the countries that coöperated with Soviet Russia, and all the agreements that were made—do they all go phffft? Is it all rubbish? Unconstitutional? God knows what this all is! You don't have to be too bright to understand what this process is likely to lead to."

Somewhere along the way, I managed to ask Gorbachev if he still kept in contact with Yeltsin.

"He never calls me," Gorbachev said. "I called him several times at first, but from his side there has never been a call. Boris Nikolayevich knows everything! We have no relations. What kind of personal relations can there be when his press secretary publishes a statement saying that they will take measures against Gorbachev, that they will put him in his place? What relations can there be? This is ruled out.

"The democrats have failed to use their power. Look at how they struggled for power and how much they promised. There were even statements that the Russian President would lay himself down across the railroad tracks if living standards went down. Well, now they've gone down fifty per cent! The tracks must be occupied.

"They have to tell the people how they are going to get through the winter, what there will be to eat, whether there will be any heat, and what will happen to reforms. And they have no answer. They don't know what to say. They need to play for time and they need to find a lightning rod. It's amazing—Yeltsin's team, the Constitutional Court, and the fundamentalists who defended against the August coup are all in this struggle together against Gorbachev. This is phenomenal!"

I LEFT Gorbachev's office thinking that everything about him was outsized: his achievements, his mistakes, and, now, his vanity and bitterness. At one point in his monologue, he even passed on a rumor that at the tensest moments of the coup Yeltsin was making plans to hide in the American Embassy. This was hard, almost impossible, to believe. For all Yeltsin's shortcomings, it was his courage that won the day in August of 1991. Gorbachev, in suggesting otherwise—especially in such a clumsy way—revealed the depths of his resentment. He had loved his place in the world—a place he had earned, despite all the mistakes—and now, it seemed, it was slipping away, almost gone. He was despised in his own country.

Feeling a little stunned, I headed down a flight of stairs to visit the man who had been his closest friend and ally in the leadership, Aleksandr Yakovlev. I told Yakovlev what I had just heard, and he rolled his eyes in amusement and frustration. Yakovlev had always betrayed a certain intellectual condescension toward Gorbachev, but he also appreciated his political gifts, his complexity.

I told Yakovlev that I had finally seen the transcript of the historic March 11, 1985, Politburo meeting, and that I'd been a little surprised that things had gone so easily for Gorbachev. Why was there no opposition? And was Gorbachev deceiving the conservatives? Why did they make him General Secretary if they knew he would try to change the system?

"There was a preliminary agreement," Yakovlev said. "Everything was agreed on beforehand. Everything was clear. Grishin's entourage prepared a speech, a program for him. Richard Kosolapov, the editor of *Kommunist*, was very active on Grishin's behalf. But that was just in case. In fact, there were no other candidates for this position. Once Gorbachev was made chairman of the commission for Chernenko's funeral, everything was clear.

"But about deception. This was really a question of the inertia of the Communist Party. Every new General Secretary got carte blanche at the beginning. A new man would come to the fore, and he was supported. You know, let him talk about innovations, about something new—it has to be tolerated—and then he will calm down and everything will go back to normal. Let him talk about democracy and pluralism, but sooner or later we'll all be back together, harnessed to the same horse cart. That happened with every newcomer—Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov. And the same destiny was expected of Gorbachev.

"Resolved: That it is the policy of this conclave to ordain women."

• •

"Gorbachev played politics, but he also realized that things had to change. It was impossible to go on living as we were. But when he started changing things the system resisted those reforms. These changes were hindered by the simple logic of the state. And, whether he wanted to or not, Gorbachev had to deal with these contradictions. Like Gorbachev, at the beginning I believed that in our country only a revolution from above was possible.

"Even now, Gorbachev talks about our 'socialist choice.' But we cannot speak of a socialist choice in this country. Our experience, our 'choice,' is not socialist and never was. We had a slave system here. Who can talk about a socialist choice? Maybe Germany, or Israel, or Spain. Not us. But Gorbachev could not overcome his way of thinking. In general, this power, the concept of power, acts like a poison on a person."

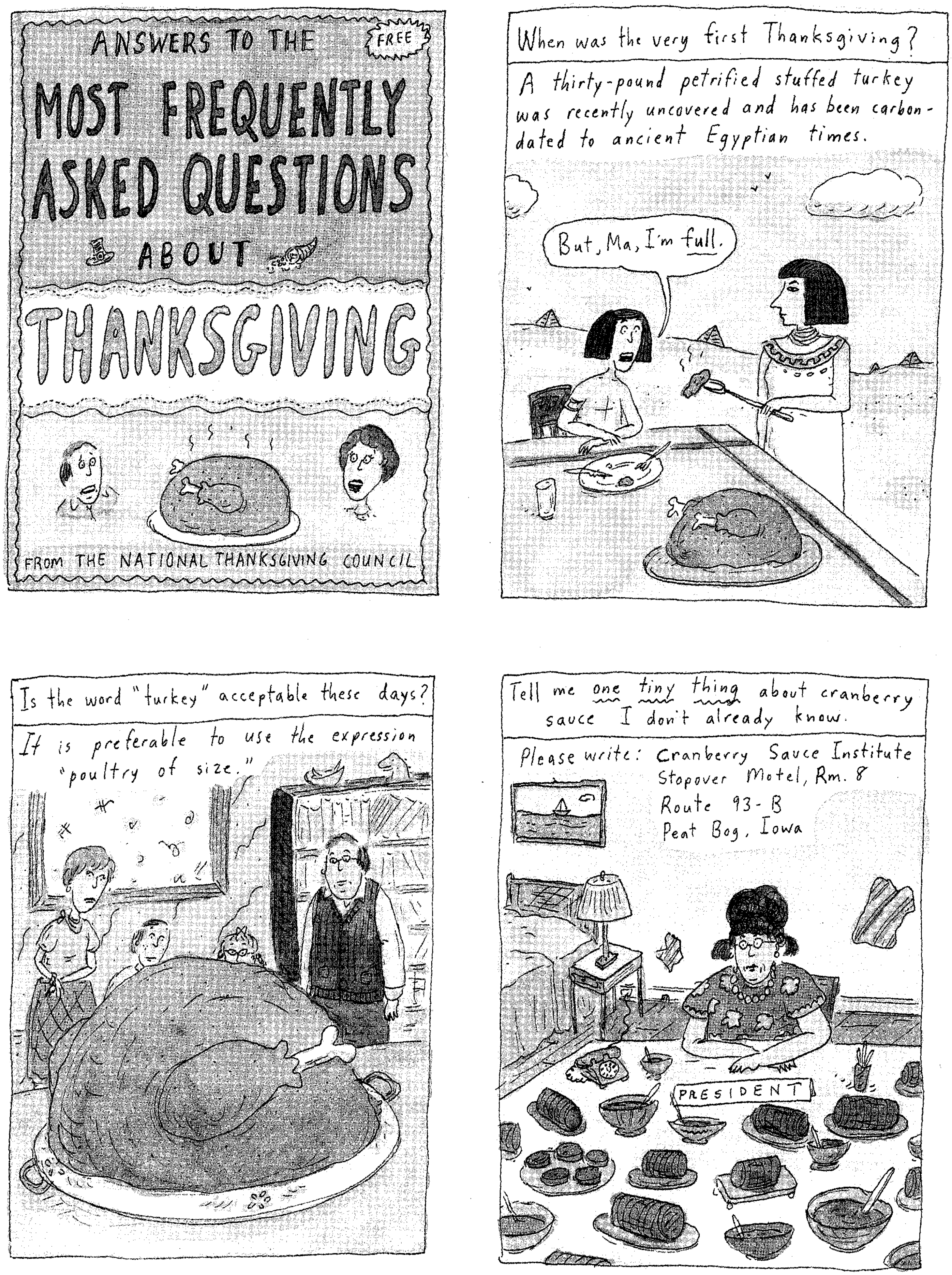
DURING my talk with Gorbachev, his press aide, Aleksandr Likhotal, had slipped him a note. Gorbachev went silent, read the note quickly, darkened with what seemed to be anger, composed himself, and then picked up the long string of his monologue. I didn't think much about it. But later that evening, as I watched the news program "Vesti," I realized what the note must have said: for his refusal to appear in court, he was being deprived of his right to travel abroad. He had a trip planned to South Korea, and there were more trips on his schedule. That was a cruel and clever blow. Gorbachev got warm, endless applause abroad; he was treated like one of the great figures of the century. In Moscow, he was punished, mocked, ignored.

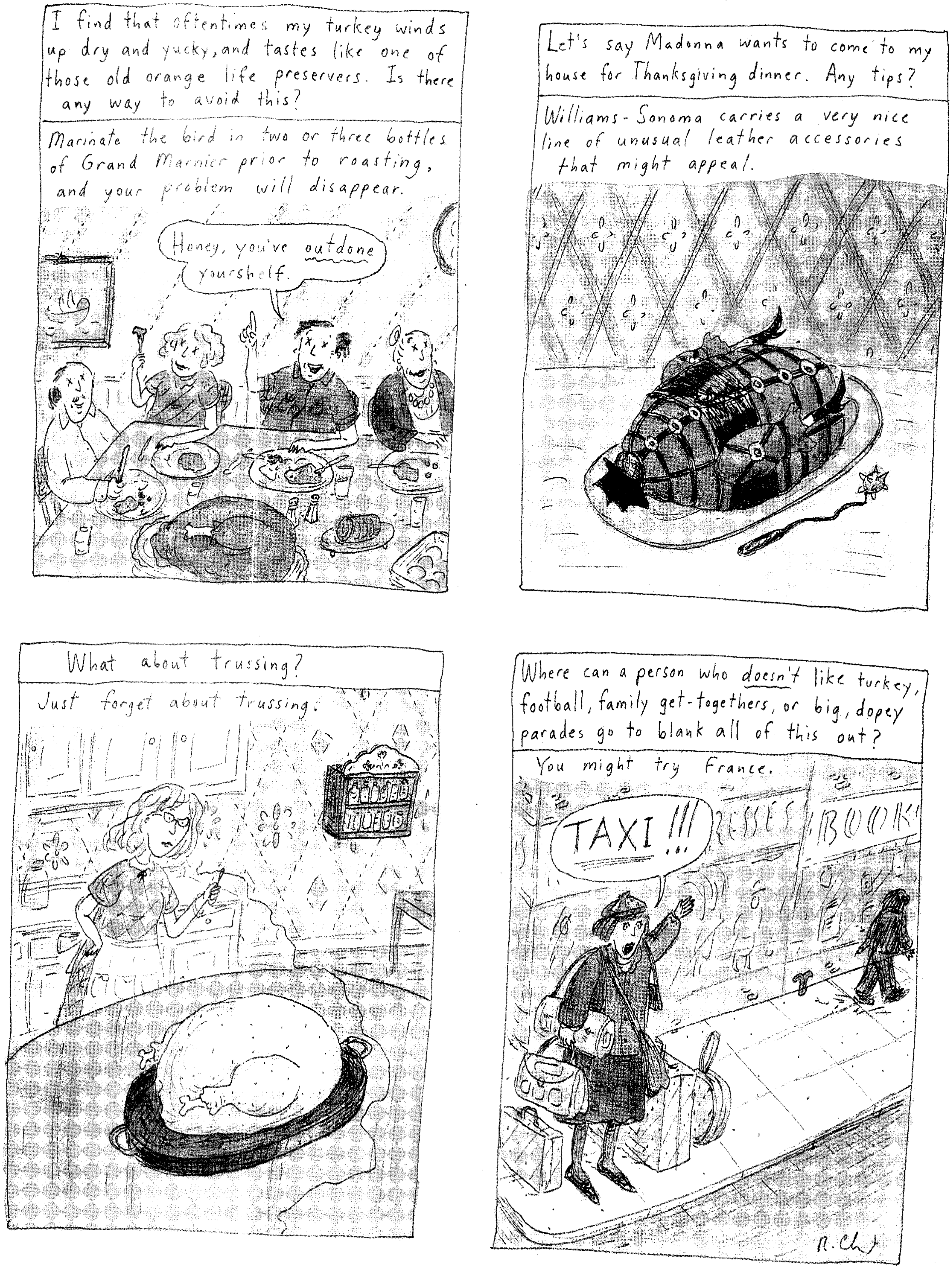
Three days later, the Russian government announced that it would take back most of the building it had given Gorbachev as part of his resignation package. On a cool gray morning, three buses filled with Moscow police officers pulled up to the institute. The police chief at the time, Arkady Murashev, ordered his men to surround the building.

Just minutes later, Gorbachev arrived, in a rage. The press gathered around him on the front steps of the building. "You don't know the pressure that my family and I have endured in the past seven years," he told the reporters. "But personal matters are not the thing. They are trying to put Gorbachev in his place. The Russian press speculates that Gorbachev is travelling the world looking for a vacation house. There's the rumor that my daughter is in Germany and her husband is to join her there. Or America. And, now that he has a daughter settled, Gorbachev is looking for a warm place for himself. Well, they'd be very happy if Gorbachev left the country. They'd probably pay a million for it. But I'm not leaving."

A few miles away, the Constitutional Court heard its next witness. The tired men of the Communist Party protested their innocence. They seemed to ask, How could we have been what you charge? Just look at us. We are plain. We are ordinary. We are nobody now.

A verdict on the Communist Party was expected by the end of November. ♦


ANSWERS TO THE
FREE
MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
ABOUT
THANKSGIVING
FROM THE NATIONAL THANKSGIVING COUNCIL
When was the very first Thanksgiving?
A thirty-pound petrified stuffed turkey was recently uncovered and has been carbon-dated to ancient Egyptian times.
But, Ma, I'm full.
Is the word "turkey" acceptable these days?
It is preferable to use the expression "poultry of size."
Tell me one tiny thing about cranberry sauce I don't already know.
Please write: Cranberry Sauce Institute
Stopover Motel, Rm. 8
Route 93-B
Peat Bog, Iowa
PRESIDENT


I find that oftentimes my turkey winds up dry and yucky, and tastes like one of those old orange life preservers. Is there any way to avoid this?
Marinate the bird in two or three bottles of Grand Marnier prior to roasting, and your problem will disappear.
Honey, you've outdone yourshelf.
Let's say Madonna wants to come to my house for Thanksgiving dinner. Any tips?
Williams-Sonoma carries a very nice line of unusual leather accessories that might appeal.
What about trussing?
Just forget about trussing.
Where can a person who doesn't like turkey, football, family get-togethers, or big, dopey parades go to blank all of this out?
You might try France.
TAXI!!!
BOOK
R. Ch

FICTION

JEALOUS

by Richard Ford

IN the last days that I lived with my father in his house below the Teton River, he read to me. Seated at the kitchen table after work or on the cold mornings when I dressed in front of him by the stove, he read out loud to me from the Havre or the Conrad newspapers or from magazines—*Lifes* and *Geographics*—or from old schoolbooks that had been bound in twine and abandoned in the back rooms of our house by some previous, unknown family who'd left behind the things they couldn't take.

We were alone there. These were the months following my mother's first departure, and we had lived out from Dutton since my school year began. My mother had left the summer before, at the end of a long period of troubles between them, and almost immediately after that my father quit his job in Great Falls and moved us up to Dutton, where he took a new job, working on farm machinery. He had always liked a drink, and so had my mother, and they had had friends who drank. But in Dutton he quit drinking altogether, quit having any whiskey around the house. He worked long days in town, and trained his bird dogs in the evening, and I went to high school, and that was what life was like.

It may have been, of course, that he was expecting some important event to take place, some piece of news to suddenly reach him. Possibly he was waiting, as the saying goes, for lightning, and what he wanted was to be in the right place and in the right frame of mind to make a clear decision when the time came. It may have been that he read to me as a way of saying, "We don't know all there is to know. There is more order in life than there seems to be. We have to pay attention." That is all another way of saying that he was at a loss then. Though my father had never been a man who stood by and watched things get the better of him. He was a man who acted, a man who cared to do the right thing. And I know that even on the day these events took place he was aware that a moment to act had come. None of it is anything I blame him for.

ON the day before Thanksgiving, it rained an hour before daylight, when I was waking up, then rained through the afternoon, when the temperature fell and snow began and the front of the mountains disappeared into a bluish fog, so that it was no longer possible to see the grain elevators in Dutton, ten miles away.

My father and I were waiting for my mother's sister to arrive to take me to the train in Shelby. I was going to Seattle to visit my mother, and my aunt was going with me. I was seventeen years old then. It was 1975, and I had never ridden on a train before.

My father had come home early, taken a bath, dressed in a clean shirt and slacks, then sat at the kitchen table with a stack of *Newsweeks* from the town library. I was already dressed and my bag was packed, and I was standing at the kitchen window watching for my aunt's car.

"Are you familiar with Patrice Lumumba?" my father said after reading to himself for a while. He was a tall, bone-chested man with thick black hair and thick hands and arms, and the table seemed small in front of him.

"Was she a singer?" I said.

"*He*," my father said. He was looking out the lower lenses of his glasses as if he were trying to read small print. "He was the African Negro Eisenhower wanted to poison in 1960, only Ike missed his big chance. His other enemies blew him up first. We all thought it was mysterious back then, but I guess it wasn't that mysterious." He took his glasses off and rubbed them on his shirt cuff. One of our setters barked once out in the pen. I watched it walk to the fence by the granary corner, sniff through the wires, then walk back in the misting snow to its house, where its sister was in the doorway. "The Republicans always have secrets," my father said, holding his glasses up and looking through them. "A great deal goes on before you wake up to life."

"I know it," I said.

"But you can't change it, so don't let it eat at you."

Through the window I saw my aunt's big pink Cadillac appear suddenly up on the horizon road. It was rushing ahead of its snow cloud, still a mile out.

"What're you going to tell your mother about living out here out of sight of land all this fall?" my father said. "That there's an atmosphere of mystery on the open prairie?" He looked up and smiled at me. "That I've been neglecting your education?"

"I hadn't thought about it very much yet," I said.

"Well, think about it," he said. "You'll have time on the train if your aunt will leave you alone." He looked back at the *Newsweek* and laid his glasses on the table.

I had hoped to say something to my father before my aunt arrived, something about my mother, that I was happy I was going to get to see her. We had not talked about her very much.

"What do you think about Mother?" I said.

"With respect to what?"

"Do you think she'll come back out here after Thanksgiving?"

He drummed his fingers on the metal tabletop, then turned and looked at the clock on the stove. "Do you want to ask her about it?"

"No, sir," I said.

"Well. You can. You can tell me, then." He looked at the window as though he was checking the weather. One of the dogs barked again inside its house, and then the other one barked. Sometimes a coyote came into the yard out of the wheat fields and set them off. "Eventually the suspense falls out of the story," he said. He closed the magazine and folded his hands on top of it. "Who's your best friend now? I'm just curious."

"Just my ones in the Falls, still," I said.

"Who's your best one up here, though?"

"I don't have one now," I said.

My father put his glasses back on. "That's too bad. It's your choice, though."

"I know it is," I said, because I had already considered that and decided I did not have time to know anybody there.

I watched my aunt's car turn onto our road and the pale beams of her headlights burn through the pale, snowy air.

A mile farther down the road, a blue mobile home sat out in the fields, unprotected from the wind. The farmer in town who owned our house owned it, too, and rented it to the civics teacher at the high school. Joyce Jensen was her name. She was in her twenties, a heavyset woman with strawberry-colored hair, and my father had slept some nights down there in the last month. "Yoyce Yensen," he called her, and always laughed. I could see a car parked in front of her little trailer, a red one beside her dark one.

"What do you see out there?" my father said. "Have you caught sight of your Aunt Doris?"

"She's got her lights on," I said.

"Well," my father said, "then you're gone, you just haven't left." He reached in his shirt pocket and took out a little fold of dollar bills with a rubber band around it. "When you get to Shelby, buy your mother a bijou," he said. "She won't expect it. It'll make her happy." He handed the bills up to me, then stood to watch my aunt drive up to the house. "There's a moment in the day when you miss having a drink," he said, watching from the kitchen with me. He put his hand on my shoulder, and I could smell soap on his skin. "That's the old life, of course. We're on to the new life now. The lucky few."

MY aunt honked her horn as she came past the caragana row into the house lot. She drove an Eldorado Cadillac, a '69, faded pink with a white vinyl top. Her wipers were on for the snow, and the windows were fogged. She had parked that car in front of our house in Great Falls before, and I had given it a good inspection then.

"Let me step out and tell your Aunt Doris a joke," my father said. "You go lock the shutters on the pigeons. I'll forget about them tonight, and it'll drift in. I won't be but a minute." My aunt's window automatically came down as my father went to the door, and I could see her looking at our little farmhouse as if she thought it had been abandoned.

My aunt was a pretty woman and had a reputation for being wild, which my mother didn't have, or so my father had told me. She was my mother's younger sister. She was thirty-six and blond and thin with soft, pale arms you could see her veins in. She wore glasses, and once when I had seen her without them, one morning when I woke up and she was in the house, she looked like a girl to me, somebody younger than I was. I knew that my father liked her, and that they'd had something between them for a while in Great Falls after my mother left, even though Doris was married to some Gros Ventre Indian man, who wasn't then in the picture. Twice she had driven up and cooked dinner for us, and twice my father had gone down to the Falls to see her, and there were a few times late at night when they talked on the phone for a long time. But I thought it was finished between them. My father said something about Doris that made her seem like a bad event might've happened to her—some tragedy, he didn't know what—and I thought he really only liked her because she looked a little like my mother.

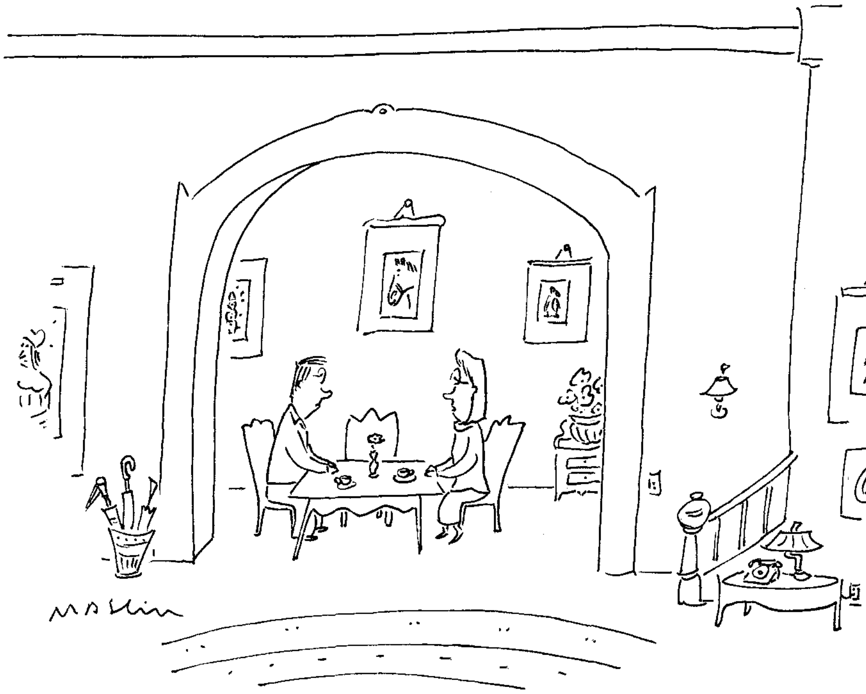
"There's something winning about Doris, though," my father said once, "something your mother might've used." The day he said that, we were working dogs and had stopped to watch them cast up into the wheat stubble, a mile east of the house. It was gold down to the river, which was shiny, and the sky above the mountains was as blue as I have ever seen blue.

"What is it?" I said.

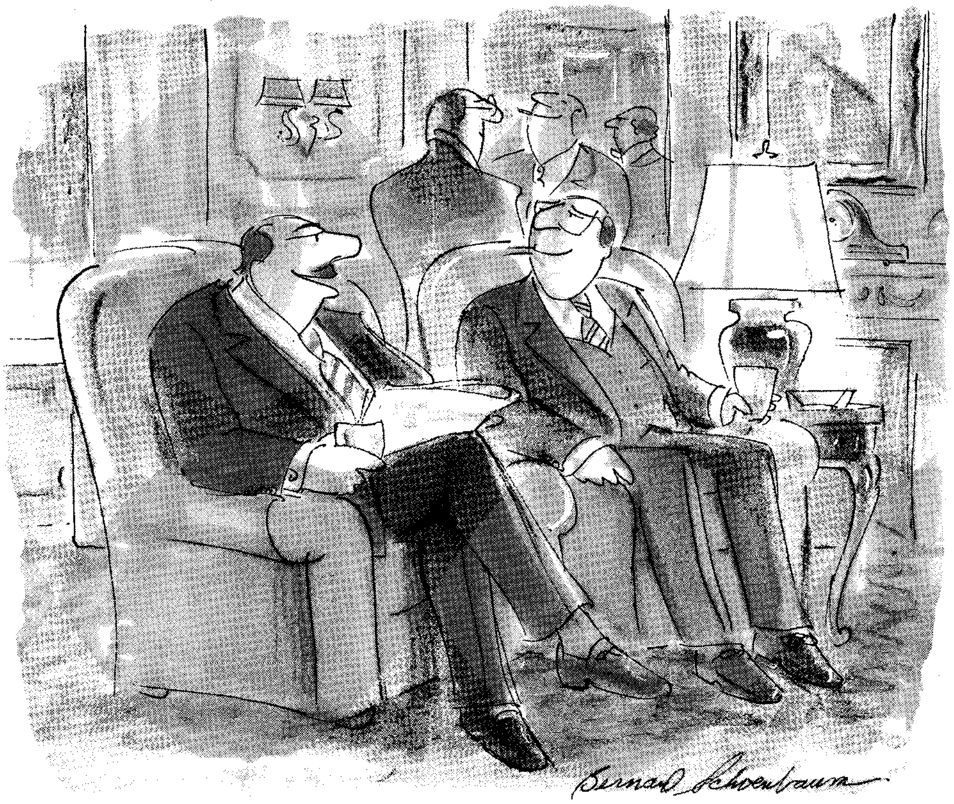
"Oh, she's sympathetic," he said. "One of these days that might seem important to you." And then we quit talking about it, though it was already important to me to be sympathetic, and I thought my mother was, and knew he thought so, too.

My father walked out onto the gravel, still in his shirtsleeves. I saw Doris stick her arm out the window and wag her hand back and forth to the pace of my father's walking. I saw her smile and begin to say something, but I couldn't hear it.

I put on my wool jacket and took my bag and went out the back door into the yard toward the pigeon coop. It was four o'clock in the afternoon and the sun—just a white light behind white clouds—was above the mountain peaks beyond Choteau, and it was already colder than



"That's right, Phil. A separation will mean—among other things—watching your own cholesterol."



"Let's just say that I've lived up to the highest moral code permitted by law."

• •

it had been when I had come in from school at noon on the bus. The yard around the house had farm implements sitting useless, except for the tank truck we hauled water in, and snow was beginning to collect on their rusted surfaces and in the grass. My father was bent over, leaning against the windowsill of Doris's Cadillac on his elbows, and I saw she had her hand on his arm and was laughing at something they were saying. I must've stopped, because Doris quit laughing and looked at me, halfway out to the pigeon house. She blinked the lights on the Cadillac, then I went on. It occurred to me that they might go inside.

The pigeon pen was an old chicken coop my father had boarded up the sides of to keep foxes and coyotes out. He kept pigeons to train his setters, and he had an idea he could make money training bird dogs if word got out he was good at it—which he was. There were plenty of birds in that part of Montana—pheasants and partridge and grouse—and he thought he'd have time for all that when the harvest was over. He and I would drive out into the cut fields in the evening with two dogs, and four pigeons stuck head-down in our coat pockets. My father would lead a dog out two hundred yards on a check cord, and I would tuck a pigeon's head under its wing and shake it and blow on it, then stash it in a wheat-straw tuft, where it would stay, confused, until the dog found it by its scent and pointed. Then my father or I would walk up and kick the bird flying, a red ribbon and a stick tied to its leg so it wouldn't fly far.

There was never shooting involved. My father didn't like to shoot birds. There were not enough of them left, he said. But he liked to work dogs and to see them point and for the bird to fly. He had grown up in western Minnesota—he and Mother both—and he liked to be out on the plains. What other people did, he said, was their business.

I heard the birds thumping in their coop, and cooing and fluttering. I peeped through the chicken wire and could see them, thirty or forty, gray and thick-chested, their smell thinner because of the cold. My father caught them in barns, using his landing net, standing in the middle of the barn floor with the door shut in the half-dark, swinging his net on a cord as the birds, excited by the motion, flew from rafter to rafter, and snaring them one or two or three at a time and handing them out to me to put in a potato sack. I never knew about things like this before I lived alone with him. We had never done that. But he liked it, and I would stand outside in the daylight, watching through the cracks in the boards, watching the pigeons, their wings flashing in the light that entered through the other walls, and my father making a humming noise in his throat—*hmmm, hmmm, hmmm*, a sound I've heard prizefighters make—as his net went around and the pigeons fluttered into his grasp.

I let the shutters down over the wire coops and latched them. Then I stood with my suitcase and watched my father. He was still leaning on Doris's car in the snow. She still had her hand on his wrist. As I watched, she put her cheek against his hand, and my father stood up straight and looked toward the road in front of the house beyond the caragana. Then I thought he looked over Doris's car in the direction of Joyce Jensen's trailer. He said something into the window to Doris and pulled his hands back and stuck them in his pockets. Then he looked at me and waved his arm in a wide way for me to come on.

"THAT'LL curl your hair, I'll tell you what," I heard Doris say when I got close to the car.

"Your Aunt Doris is worried about getting stuck in the snow in her limo," my father said. He stood back a couple of feet from the car and was smiling. Snow was in his hair. "Get her to tell you her joke about Japanese cars. That'll amuse you."

Doris looked at my father as if he'd surprised her. "I'll wait a couple of years on that," she said. "I want your dad to ride up to Shelby with us tonight, Larry," she said through the car window. "He claims he has other plans he doesn't care to discuss. I'm sure you'll explain it all to me."

"I'd have a hard time getting home tonight," my father said, still smiling. "I'd get in some kind of trouble."

It was snowing harder now. My

father's arms looked cold, and I was cold myself and eager to get going, eager to go with Doris. I went around and put my bag in the back seat and climbed in front, where the heater was on and it was warm and smelled sweet and the radio was turned on low. If my father had plans, he hadn't told me about them, though I thought he would go down to visit Joyce Jensen.

"You only get so many invitations, then people quit asking," Doris said. She was smiling, too, but I knew she wanted him to come with us. She patted me on the knee. "How're you, honey bunch?" she said. "Did you take your happy pill today? I hope so."

"I just took one," I said. I could smell her perfume. She had on bright-red earrings and a brown wool car coat, under which I could see the hem of a red wool dress. She always wore a lot of red.

My father took a few steps back from the car. "You ought to get a sign on your mailbox, Donny," Doris said out her window. "'N.H.Y.'—Nothing's happened yet. Because that'd be the truth."

"We're moving cautiously out here," my father said. He leaned down without touching the car and looked in at me. "Explain to your aunt about the atmosphere of mystery out here on the Great Plains." He was smiling. "She'll get a kick out of that." Doris pulled the car down into gear. "Say Happy Thanksgiving to my old friends in Seattle," my father said, and he looked at me then, and he looked odd standing in the snow by himself, as if he thought what he'd just said was silly but he hadn't meant it to be.

Doris started raising the window as she turned the wheel. "You think you can't make life better, Donny, but you can," she said. "You've been out here too many nights alone together. It's making you squirrelly."

"We're working on that," my father said, and he shouted it for some reason. I didn't know what he meant, though what I wished then was that we could get the hell out of there and get on the road to where we were going.

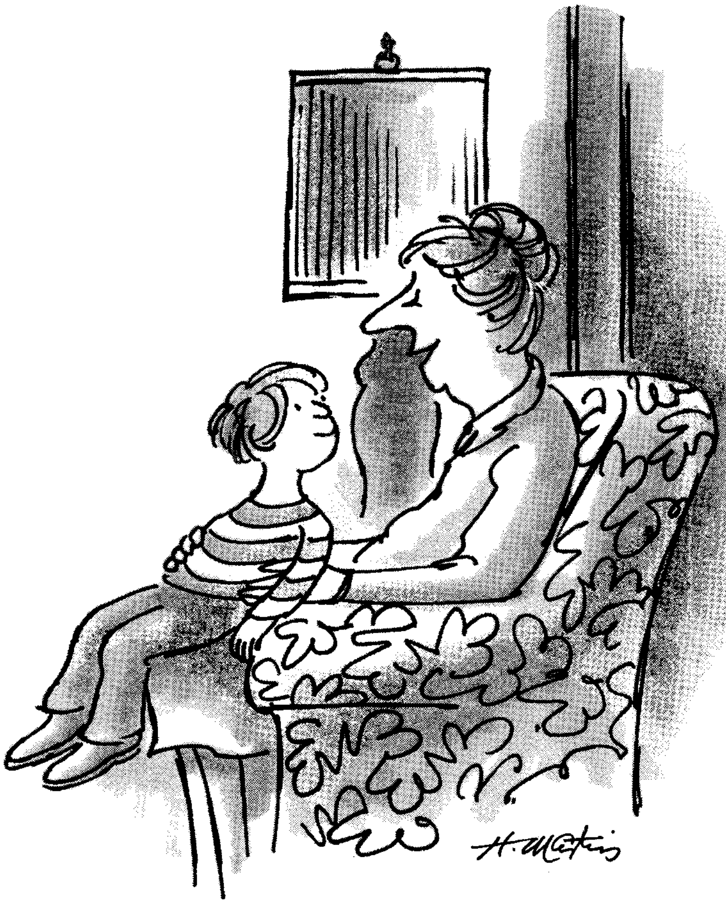
DORIS decided to have a drink before we got to the interstate. She had a bottle of schnapps under the windshield visor, and told me to pour some into a Styrofoam cup from a stack on the back-seat floor. On the wet floor with the cups was a cardboard "For Sale" sign, a drinking glass, a bunch of postcards—one showed a bear dancing on a beach ball—a padded snow glove, a hairbrush, and some snapshots of Doris sitting at a desk in an office, wearing a short skirt and smiling up at the camera. It had been taken at the police department in Great Falls, where Doris worked. Part of a man's sleeve with sergeant's stripes on it was visible in the picture.

"Those are my glamorous mug shots," Doris said, holding her schnapps bottle in the hand she held the steering wheel with, "in case I forget who I am—or was—or if somebody ever found me dead, and wondered. I wrote my name on the backs."

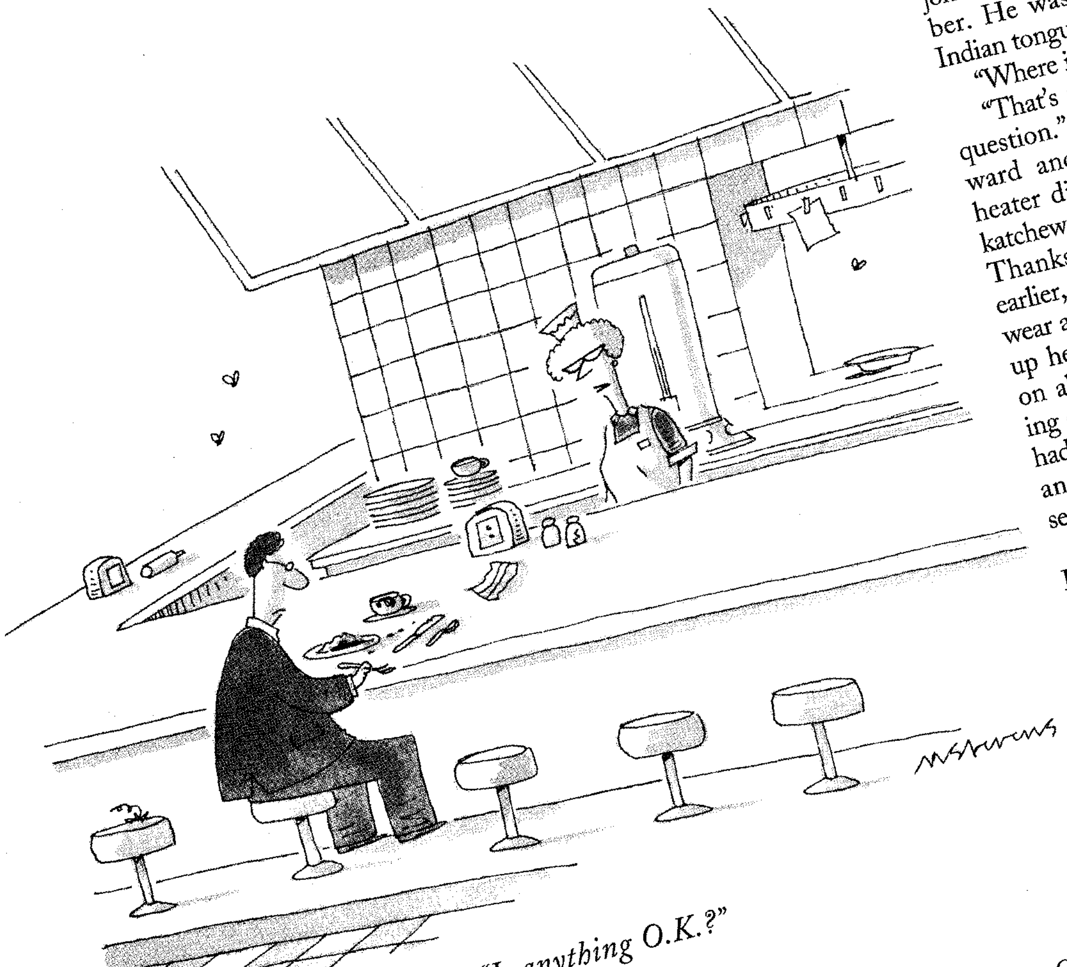
I turned over one of the photographs, and Doris's name was written in ink that had faded. There were other things on the floor—a copy of a magazine called *World Conflict*, and two or three paperback books with their covers torn off. I took a cup from the stack of cups and gave it to her.

"Who do you think'll find you?" I said. We were going up onto the interstate, and I was pouring schnapps in her cup. The little town of Dutton, Montana, where I had been in school since September, sat just on the other side of the highway. Ten streets of houses, two bars, a Sons of Norway, three churches, a grocery, a library, three elevators, and a V.F.W. with an old sabre jet from Korea mounted as if it were taking off into the snowy sky. All around everywhere else was plow ground being covered in snow.

"Never can tell who'll find you," Doris said, watching her rearview mirror as we got out onto the highway. "I really don't like Montana," she said. "And I particularly hate the roads. There's only one way to get anywhere. It's better seen from an airplane." She straightened her arms toward the steering wheel as if she were taking off in a jet herself. We picked up speed and shot slush behind us. A bead of water entered the wind-



"Oh, lots of things were different when I was a child. For one thing, it wasn't all cats. It was dogs."



"*Is anything O.K.?*"

shield through a crack at the top, but froze before it could drip in. "So. What's about the atmosphere of mystery?"

"He was reading to me out of a magazine," I said. "He made it up."

"I see." She had a sip of schnapps. "And do you think you understand what the trouble is between your mom and your dad?"

"They don't get along enough right now," I said. "My mother decided to go to school." That had been what my mother had told me when she left. She was in school in Seattle learning how to make out income-tax forms. She'd be finished before Christmas.

"They know too much about each other," Doris said. "They have to figure out what the hell difference that makes. Sometimes it's good but not always."

"Isn't that supposed to happen?" I said.

"It certainly is," Doris said and looked up in the mirror again. There were no other cars on the highway, only big tractor-trailers going north, running to get someplace by Thanksgiving. "When I was living with Benny as man and wife he had many, many things I never understood inside *his* head. Indian things. Spirits. He believed they came to our house. He believed you had to give your valuables away—or gamble them away in his particular case. He told me once that he wanted to be buried on a wood platform on a high hill. He believed in all that—Indian medicine—which was all fine, and I mean it." Doris rubbed her nose with the heel of her hand, then just stared at the highway, where there was white mist like a fog collecting.

"What did you say about it?" I said and looked at her.

"About the wood platform?" she said. "I said, 'Fine, a wood platform's all right with me. But don't expect me to build it or get you up there, because I'm a Seventh-day Adventist, and we don't believe in platforms.'"

"What did Benny say?" I had only met Benny once, and remembered him as a big quiet man with black-rimmed glasses, who smelled like cigarettes.

"He laughed. He was a Lutheran, of course. Converted by missionaries in Canada or someplace or North Dakota. I forget. It might've all been a joke. But he was a tribal member. He was that. Spoke the Indian tongue."

"Where is he?" I said.

"That's the sixty-four-dollar question." Doris reached forward and turned down the heater dial. "Shaunavon, Saskatchewan, is my guess, where Thanksgiving comes later or earlier, one or the other. I still wear a wedding ring." She held up her ring finger. "But I was on about Don and Jan knowing each other too well. I never had that problem with Benny, and we're still married. In a sense we are, anyway."

"In what sense?" I said, and I smiled at her because something in that seemed funny. I could remember her and my father talking out in the living room until late at night, and then everything getting quiet and finally the sound of lamps being clicked off.

"At a distance, Mr. Genius," Doris said, "and in the sense that if he comes back we'd pick up where we left off. Or try to. If he's intending to stay gone, though, I wish we could get divorced so I could begin to pick up the pieces." She laughed then. "That wouldn't take a lifetime."

"What do you think'll happen?" I asked, referring to my father and mother. I had never asked anybody but my father about that before, and when I'd asked him the first time, he said my mother was going to come back—which was what he thought before we left Great Falls. Though in the car, on the ride home from a baseball game, he'd suddenly said, "Love's just what two people decide to do. It's not a religion." He must've been thinking about it.

"What do I think's going to happen?" Doris said. She adjusted her glasses up on her nose and took a deep breath as though this was not an easy question. "It depends on timing and the situation of third parties," she said very seriously. "If your mom, for instance, has a young pretty boyfriend out in Seattle, or if your Dad has a girlfriend back there where Jesus left his ankle shoes, then that's a problem. But if they can hold out long enough to get lonely then they'll probably do fine—though they don't want to hold out *too* long. This is my opinion, of course, based on nothing." Doris looked over at me and reached and adjusted the collar of my coat, which was turned up. "How old are you?" she said. "I should know that kind of thing."

"Seventeen," I said, wondering about my mother's having a pretty boyfriend in Seattle. I'd thought about it in the months she'd been gone and decided she didn't have one.

"Then you've got your whole life in front of you for worrying," Doris said. "Don't start now. They ought to teach that in school instead of history. Worry management. Would you, by the way, like to know something about yourself?"

"What?" I said. She didn't look at me, just kept driving.

"You smell like wheat!" Doris said, and laughed. "Ever since you got in this car it's smelled like a silo in here. Won't Don let you sleep in the house with him?"

I was shocked to hear that, because I didn't like living out on the farm or in that house and I knew I might smell that way, because I could smell it in all the rooms and in my father's clothes. And I felt angry about it, angry at *him*, though I didn't want to let Doris know that. "They stored grain in our house before we moved in," I said and then did not say anything else.

"You're a real hick, aren't you?" she said. "You better check your shoes." She laughed again.

"We're just out there this year," I said. And I felt even angrier about the whole subject. Out the clouded window, the first dark rows of tilled winter wheat began just beyond the road verge and the fence line—snow crusting between the new rows. What I wanted to do, I thought then, was stay in Seattle with my mother and start in a new school after Christmas even if it meant starting the year over. I wanted to get out of this country where we didn't have a TV and hauled our water every week and where the coyotes woke you up howling and my father and I had nobody to talk to but each other. I was missing something, I thought, an important opportunity, and later, when I tried to explain to someone how it was, that I had not been a farm boy but had just led life like that for a while, no one would believe me. And after that it would always be impossible to explain how things really were.

"I was depressed for a long time after Benny left," Doris said. "Do you know what that means? To be depressed?"

"I guess not," I said gloomily.

Doris reached forward and put her finger on the hole in the windshield where water had come in, then frozen. She looked at the tip of her finger to see if it was wet, then looked at me and smiled. "You're way too young for turmoil," she said, "because I'm too young for it myself." She licked her finger. "Tell me about your dad, has he got a girlfriend out there in Siberia? I'll bet he has. Some little diamond in the rough."

"He does," I said. I didn't think it was too important, and I didn't care if she told my mother. "There's a teacher down the road from us."

"Well, good for him," Doris said, though she didn't smile about it. "What's her name?"

"Joyce," I said.

"That's a cute name. I guess your mother doesn't know about this."

"I don't know if she does," I said.

"Not that it matters, I'm sure she doesn't," Doris said. I wondered if my father was down at Joyce Jensen's trailer right then or if he was at home reading *Newsweek*. I remembered the red car in front of the trailer.

Doris took her bottle of schnapps and handed it and her cup to me. "I'd have another, please."

I wondered if she was going to get drunk because I'd told her my dad had a girlfriend. It was getting dark and the snow was adding up and it was colder, and even though we were close to Shelby it was still three hours until the train. And I had a fear that we'd miss it, that Doris would get drunk and go to sleep someplace where I couldn't wake her up and I'd end up back at home that night, going in the front door after midnight and finding no one there.

I poured less than I'd poured the last time. The schnapps was gluey on my fingers and tasted like root beer. I had been in bars with my father and seen that schnapps before, but I hadn't actually seen anybody drink it.

"You know," Doris said and she sounded indignant about something, "you realize you don't belong to your dad, don't you? Nobody belongs to anybody. Some people think they do but that's ridiculous."

"I know it," I said. "I'll be on my own when the school year's over."

"You're on your own right now. School doesn't determine that," Doris said. "I'm not your mother. You know that, don't you? I'm your aunt. A technicality. It doesn't matter to me what you do. You can move right back to Great Falls tomorrow if you want to. You can live with me. That'd be an innovation." Doris cut her eyes at me, still indignant. I thought she might want me to have a drink of schnapps, but I didn't want it. I remembered a little tattoo she had on her shoulder, a blue-and-red butterfly I had seen the summer before, when she was in the house and spending time with my father. "You're like a bird in a glass cage, aren't you?" she said.

"I won't stay there too long," I said.

"We'll see about that," Doris said, staring out the windshield into the snowflakes. "Did you buy your mother a nice present?"

"I'm going to," I said.

"Did your dad give you a lot of money now that he's collecting a big check?"

"I had some," I lied, thinking that nice stores would already be closed in Shelby. I pictured the main street where I'd only been once, with my father, when my mother had taken the train back from the Cities, and I could only remember it as a row of bar and motel signs with Route 2 running through the town toward Havre. "I worked at the elevator in the harvest," I said.

"Is Don still off drink?"

"Yes, he is," I said.

"And do you two get along together just great?"

"Yes," I said, "we do."

"Well that's wonderful," she said. Out in the snow and fog haze I could see faint yellow lights all in a string at the bottom of a hill. It was Shelby. "I used to think your father'd married the wrong sister, since we all met at the same time. You know? I thought he was too good for Jan. But I don't think so now. She and I have gotten a lot closer than we used to be since she's been out in Seattle. We talk on the phone about things." Doris let her window down and poured out the schnapps that was left. It hit the back window and froze. "She's pretty wonderful, did you know that? Did you know your mother was wonderful?"

"I knew that," I said. "What do you think about Dad?"

"You can't go back on your important decisions," Doris said. "He's fine. That's how I feel about him. I don't particularly trust him. He's not equipped to care for things very much—he's like a cat in that way. But he's fine."

"Are you sorry you didn't marry him?" I said. I thought she was wrong about my father, of course. He cared about things as much as anybody did, and more than Doris did, I felt sure.

"How's this?" Doris said, and she smiled at me in a sweet way, a way that could make you like her. "If I had, then we wouldn't have you here, would we? Everything'd be different." She tapped me on the knee. "So there's good to everything. That's a belief Seventh-day Adventists hold." She scratched her fingernails on my knee, and smiled at me again, and we drove on into Shelby, where it was still snowing, and almost dark except for lights down the main street.

THERE were already Christmas decorations up in Shelby, strings of red and green and white lights strung across the three intersections, and little Christmas trees on top of the traffic lights. Plenty of cars and trucks were on the streets in the snow, and the stores were open. We drove past a big lighted grocery store, where the parking lot was full of cars and pickups and people carrying packages. I saw a drugstore and a card shop and a Western-wear on the main street, all with their lights on and customers moving around the aisles inside.

"Something's physically odd about Shelby, don't you think?" Doris said, driving slowly along and looking out at the business signs and Thanksgiving cutouts in the store windows. "It has a certain foreignness. It just seems pointless somehow up here. Maybe it's being so close to Canada. I don't know."

"Maybe I can get out and buy something now," I said. I'd seen a Redwing store and thought for a moment about buying my mother a pair of shoes, though I didn't know her size. I remembered some green high heels I'd seen her wear, and it surprised me that I didn't remember more than that.

"You want to eat Chinese food in town," Doris said, "or dine in the dining car?"

"I'd rather eat on the train," I said, because I wanted to get out of the car then.

"I want you to enjoy yourself when you're under my protection."

"I'm enjoying myself," I said. We were stopped at a light, and I turned and looked out the rear window. I wanted to get back to the card store before it got too far past.

"Can you find the train station by yourself?" Doris glanced at the traffic in the rearview mirror.

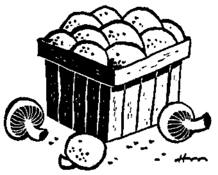
"I'll ask somebody," I said. I opened the door and slid out onto the snowy pavement.

"Don't ask an Indian," Doris said loudly. "They lie like snakes. Ask a Swede. They don't know what a lie is. That's why they make the good husbands."

"I will," I said, and closed the car door while she was talking.

People were on the sidewalk and going in and out of stores. There were plenty of cars and noises for a small town, although the snow softened everything. It was like a Saturday night in Great Falls, I thought, and I walked in a hurry down the block in the direction we'd just come from. For some reason, I didn't see the card shop where I thought it would be and didn't see the Western-wear shop, either, though there was a Chinese restaurant and a bar, and then the drugstore, where I went in to look around.

The air was warm and smelled like Halloween candy, inside. A lot of customers were in the store, and I walked down the three aisles looking for something my mother might like to receive from me and trying to think of what I already knew she liked. There was a section that had pink-and-blue boxes of candy, and a section on the wall that had perfume, and a long row of cards with Thanksgiving messages on them. I went around the middle section twice, then looked at the back of the store, where the pharmacist was and where there were footbaths and sickroom articles. I thought about something for her hair—shampoo or hair spray, but I knew she bought those for herself. Then I saw there was a case of watches in a glass display, which you rotated by pushing a silver button at the bottom. The watches were all around thirty dollars, and what my father had given me was fifty, and I thought a watch would be better than perfume, because my mother wouldn't use it up, and I liked the way the watches looked revolving behind the glass, and I was relieved that I'd decided so fast. My mother had had a watch, I remembered that; but it had been broken since sometime in the spring.



I walked around the store one more time to look at anything I'd missed or to see something else I wanted, but I didn't see anything but magazines and books. Some boys my age, wearing their maroon-and-gold Shelby jackets, were standing looking at magazines and talking to two girls. They all looked at me when I went by but didn't say anything, though I knew I wouldn't have? played football against them in Great Falls, because Shelby was too small. My own football jacket was in Dutton then, in a back room in a box, but wouldn't have been warm enough for that night. The girls said something when I had gone by, but they hadn't seemed to register seeing me.

I passed a section with ladies' bedroom slippers in clear-plastic cases. Pink and blue and red. They were ten dollars, and one size fit all. But they looked cheap to me. They looked like something Doris would put on. And I went back down to the watch case and pressed the button until I saw one come by that was gold and thin and fine-appearing, with a small face and Roman numerals, that I thought my mother would like. I bought it from a saleslady and had her wrap it in white tissue paper. I paid for it from the bills my father had given me, and put it in my jacket pocket and felt that I'd probably done the right thing in buying a watch. My father would've approved of it, would've thought I had good instinct and had bought a watch for a good price. Then I walked back outside into the cold street to begin to look for the train depot.

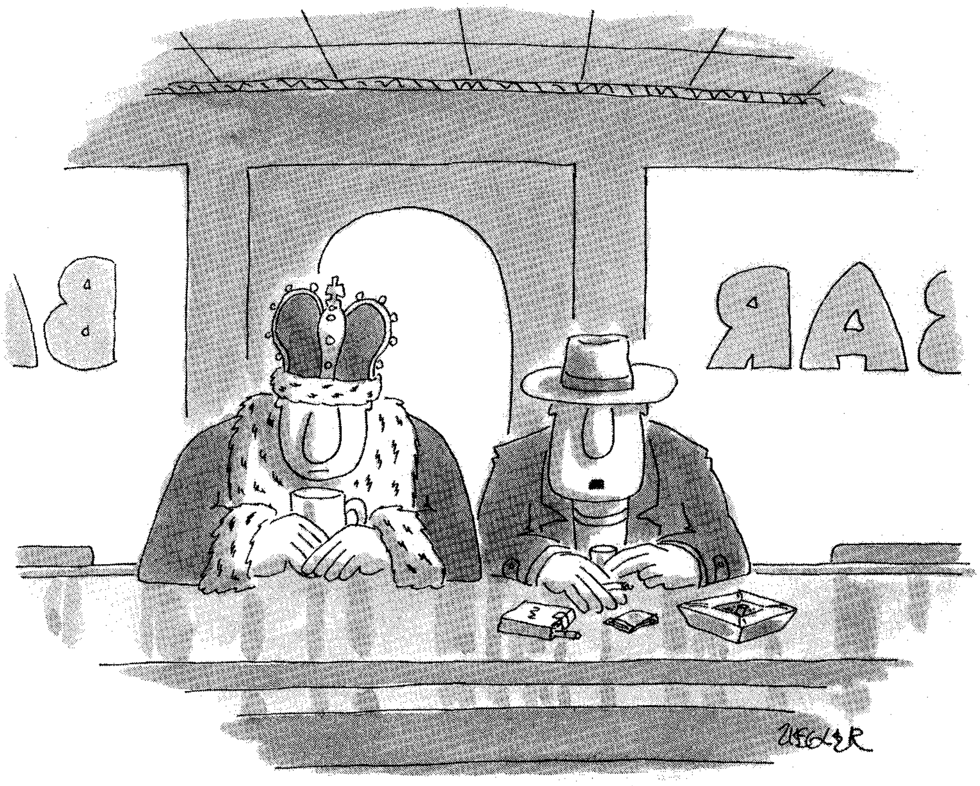
I remembered from the time I'd been in Shelby with my parents that the train station was behind the main street, in an older part of town, where there were more bars they had visited. I wasn't sure where this was, but I crossed Main Street and went between two stores, down an alley away from the Christmas lights and traffic and motel signs, and walked out into a gravel back street, beyond which was the little switch yard and the depot itself, on the far side, lit with yellow lights inside. Farther on down the rails I saw a row of grain gondolas and a moving engine light, and beyond that a car crossing the double tracks. The train yard was dark, and it was colder and still snowing lightly. I could hear the switch engine shunting cars, and as I stepped on the ties I looked both ways, east and west, and could see the rails shining out away from me toward where yellow caution lights and, farther beyond, red lights burned.

The station waiting room was warmer than the drugstore, and there were only a couple of people sitting in the rows of wooden benches, though several suitcases were against the wall, and two people were waiting to buy tickets. Doris wasn't in sight. I thought she might be in the bathroom, at the back by the telephone, and I stood by the bags and waited, though I didn't see my suitcase or hers. So that after another minute I decided she wasn't there, and I walked up to the ticket window when the other people had finished buying tickets, and asked the lady about her.

"Doris is looking for you, hon," the lady said and smiled from behind the metal window. "She bought your tickets and told me to tell you she was in the Oil City. That's across the street back that way." She pointed toward the rear door of the building. She was an older woman with short, blond hair, and she was fat. She had on a red jacket and a gold name tag that said "Betty." "Is Doris your Mom?" she asked, and began counting out dollar bills in a pile.

"No," I said, "she's my aunt. I live in Dutton." And then I said, "Is the train going to be on time?"

"Yes, indeed," she said, still counting out bills. "The train's always on time. Your aunt'll get you on it, don't worry." She smiled at me again. "Dutton rhymes with Nuttin. I been there before."



"Why is it that the people in charge always turn out to be idiots? Present company, of course, excepted."

Outside on the concrete platform I saw Doris's Cadillac parked in the little gravel lot, and across the street beyond was a dark row of small older buildings that looked like they'd been stores once but were empty now except for three of them that were bars. They were bars my mother and father had gone into the other time I had been here. At the end of the block a street began, with regular-looking houses on it, and I could see where lights were on in homes and cars were in the driveways, and snow was accumulating in the yards. Beyond the corner was a fenced tennis court barely visible in the dark.

The bars looked closed, though all three had small glass windows with lighted red bar signs and a couple of cars parked outside. When I got across the street I saw that the Oil City was the one on the end, beyond which were more empty stores. A cab was parked in front with its motor running, its driver sitting in the weak light reading a newspaper.

I hadn't been in too many bars. Mostly in Great Falls when my father was drinking. But I didn't mind going in this one, because I thought I'd been in it once before. My father said a bar wasn't a place anybody ever wanted to go but was just a place you ended up. But there was something about them I liked, some sense of expectation that stayed alive inside them even if nothing ever happened there at all.

INSIDE the Oil City it was mostly dark and music was playing and the air smelled sweet and thick. Doris was sitting at the bar talking to a man beside her, a small man wearing a white plastic hard hat and a work suit and with a pony-tail partway down his back. Drinks were in front of them, and the man's work gloves and some dollar bills were on the bar. He and Doris were talking and looking at each other straight in the eyes. I thought the man looked like an Indian, because of his hair and because there were two or three other Indians in the bar, which was a long, dark, mostly empty room with two poker machines, a booth, and a dimly lit jukebox by itself against the wall. Chairs were scattered around, and it was cold, as if there wasn't any heat working.

Doris looked in my direction but didn't seem to see me, because she turned back to the Indian in the hard hat and picked up her drink and took a sip. "That's entirely different," she said loudly. "Caring and minding are entirely different concepts. I can care and not mind, and also mind and not care. So fuck you, they're not the same." She looked toward me again, and she did see me. She was drunk. I knew that. I had seen her drunk before. "You could be a private dick the way you come sneaking in here," she said and glanced at the man beside her. "You just missed the Shelby police on a sweep through here. They said they were looking for you." Doris smiled a big smile, then reached out, took my hand, and pulled me close to her. "The two of us were just discussing absolute values. This is Mr. Barney Bordeaux. We've been informally introduced. He's in the wine-tasting business. And he's just told me a terrible story about his wife being robbed at gunpoint, right here in Shelby, sad to say, and all her money and rings stolen. So he favors honesty as an absolute value under the circumstances."

Barney frowned at her as if what she'd just said was stupid. He had narrow, dark eyes and a puffy dark Indian face under his white hard hat, which had a green Burlington Northern insignia on the front. "What's this cluck want?" he said, and squinted at me. One of his teeth in front was gone, and he looked like he'd been drinking a long time. He was small and thin and looked sick, and had a little mustache at the corners of his mouth that made him look Chinese to me. Though he also looked like he might've been handsome at one time but had had something bad happen to him.

"This is my sister's child—Lawrence," Doris said and let go of my hand and put her hand on Barney's arm as if she wanted him to stay there. "We're going to Seattle on the train tonight."

"You forgot to mention that," Barney said in an unfriendly way.

Doris looked at me and smiled. "Barney just got out of Fort Harrison. So he's celebrating. He hasn't said what he was ill with yet."

"I'm not ill with anything," Barney said. He turned straight and looked at himself in the mirror behind the back bar. "I can't see where this is taking me," he said to himself.

"It's not taking you anywhere," Doris said. Fort Harrison was the government hospital in Montana. My father had told me crazy Indians and veterans went there and saw doctors free of charge. "I had just said," Doris went on, "that loyalty was more important than honesty, if honesty meant always having to tell only the strict truth, since there're always different kinds of truth." She had taken her car coat off and piled it on the stool beside her. Her red wool dress was up above her knees. Her purse was on the bar beside her keys and some dollar bills she had laid out.

Barney suddenly turned and put his hand right on Doris's knee where her legs were crossed. He smiled and he looked right at me. "You're in trouble when people younger than you are seem smart," he said, and his smile widened so that his missing tooth was evident. I could smell sweat on him and wine. He laughed out loud then and turned back to the bar again.

"Barney's starring in his own movie," Doris said.

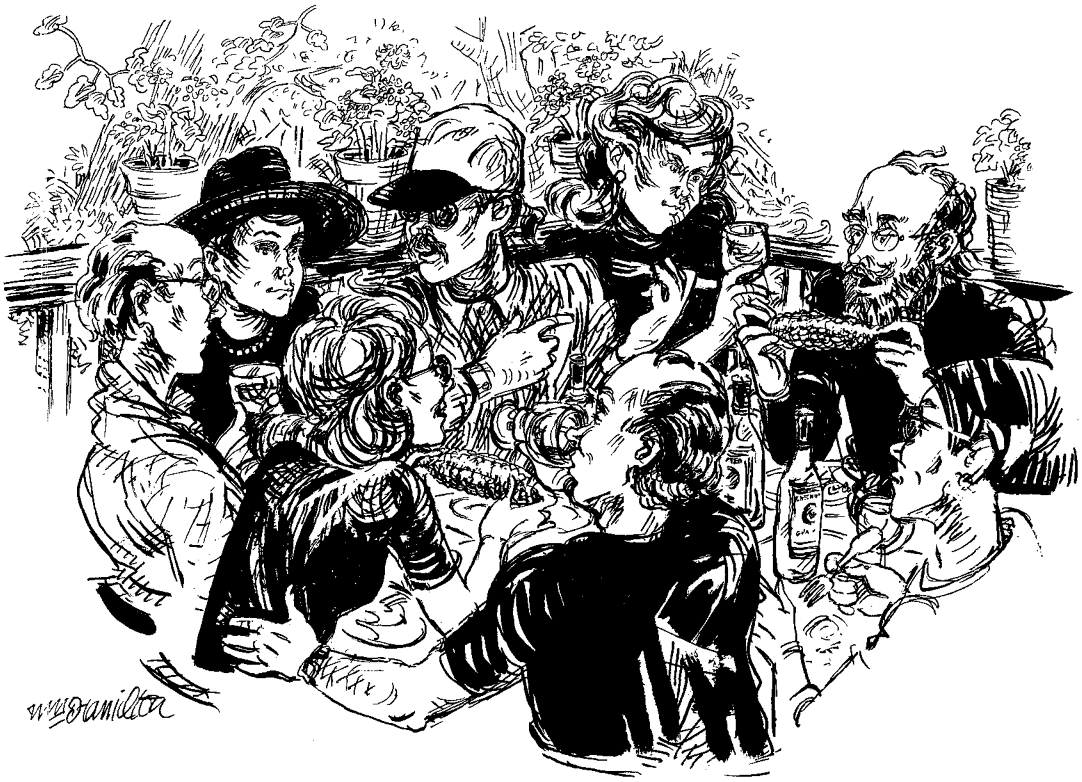
"Where's my suitcase?" I asked, because all at once I thought about it and didn't see it anywhere. I wanted to put my mother's watch in it.

"Oh, let's see," Doris said, giving Barney a look to see if he was paying attention. "I gave that away. A poor penniless colored man came through who'd lost one and I gave it to him." She picked up her car keys off the bar and dangled them without even looking at me. Then she reached in her purse, brought out my ticket, which was just a little white card, and handed it to me. "Hold your own," she said. "That way, you're responsible for yourself." She took a sip of her drink. She had switched

OPUS 131

Opus 131 in C sharp minor
Opened the great door
In the air, and through it
Flooded horror. The door in the hotel room
And the curtain at the window and even
The plain homely daylight blocking the window
Were in the wrong dimension
To shut it out. The counterpoint pinned back
The flaps of the body. Naked, faceless,
The heart panted there, like a fetus.
Where was the lifeline music? What had happened
To consolation, prayer, transcendence—
To the selective disconnecting
Of the pain center? Dark insects
Fought with their instruments
Scampering through your open body
As if you had already left it. Beethoven
Had broken down. You strained, listening
Maybe for divorce to be resolved
In the arithmetic of vibration
To pure zero, for the wave-particles
To pronounce on the unimportance
Of the menopause. Beethoven
Was trying to repair
The huge constellations of his silence
That flickered and glinted in the wind.
But the notes, with their sharp faces,
Were already carrying you off,
Each with a different bit, into the corners
Of the Universe.

—Ted Hughes



"If San Francisco was the Rome of the sixties, Vermont was the Athens."

from schnapps to something else. "What about *your* absolute values?" she said to me. "What do *you* think? I'm not sure loyalty's a good one to stay with. I may have to choose something else. Barney thinks honesty. Now you choose one."

I didn't want to choose one. I didn't know what an absolute value was or why I needed one. Doris was just playing a game, and I didn't want to play it. Though when I thought about it, all I could think of was *cold.* It was cold in the Oil City and I thought the temperature was still going down outside, and cold was on my mind.

"I don't know one," I said and thought about leaving.

"Well," Doris said, "then I'll start for you. You could say 'love,' O.K.? Or you could say 'beautiful,' or 'beauty.' Or you could probably even say the color red, which would be strange." Doris looked at her lap, at her red dress, then looked at me standing beside her. " 'Thought,' " she said. "You could say that, even though you probably don't do much of it. You just can't say nothing. And you can't say marriage or adultery or sex. They're not absolute enough." She glanced at Barney and laughed a nasty little laugh.

The poker machine clicked and dinged back in the dark. A man was talking on the pay phone back by the bathroom, and I heard him say, "That's in Lethbridge. That's an hour and a half." And the bar felt empty to me, and I realized I was wrong about ever being in it before. I turned around and looked at the one window. Beyond the neon sign, snow was coming harder, and I saw the headlights of cars going by slowly. I wondered if the snow could make our train late. I heard two car doors close outside and looked at the door, expecting it to open, but it didn't.

Barney motioned at the bartender, who was a very small, thin girl who looked like she might be a Chinese, too. She poured Barney a glass of wine out of a bottle on the back bar, then picked up a dollar off the bar. "Oh, choose one, God damn it, Lawrence," Doris said suddenly and glared at me. "I'm tired of fucking around with you. I wish I'd left you at home."

"Cold," I said.

"Cold?" Doris said and looked stunned. "Is that what you said? Cold?"

"Yes," I said.

"Did you hear that, Benny?" Doris said to Barney.

Barney was looking at his glass of wine, but he looked around at me and said, "Don't let her confuse you. I been there before."

"Cold isn't one," Doris said in an impatient way. "Try to be smart."

"Brave, then," I said. "I mean bravery."

"All right then," Doris said and picked up her glass without drinking. Only ice was left in it. She sat for a few seconds without saying anything, as if she was thinking about what I'd said. "What have you been so brave about?" she said, and turned the glass up to her nose.

Barney leaned over and whispered something in her ear, which Doris ignored. "Nothing," I said.

"It's an abstraction to you, then," she said. "Is that it?"

"Mutts fuck mutts," Barney said, and he said it seriously and to me. He suddenly grabbed my arm tight and high above the muscle. "When I get back, Lawrence, I'll show you what I mean," he said. He pulled himself off the stool, using my arm, and started off toward the dark end of the room, where the restroom hallway was, and where the man was still talking on the pay phone. He didn't walk steadily, and when he got to the entrance of the hallway he held the corner of the wall and turned and looked at us. "Don't confuse love with pain, you two," he said, and he stood for a moment, staring. I noticed his silver belt buckle was pushed off to the side in a way I'd seen on some men. Then he just disappeared down the little hall.

"Don't confuse me with your wife," Doris said and motioned for another drink. "All boats seek a place to sink is what I believe." And I stood closer to the bar, wanting to think of a way to get her to leave and wondering what Barney was going to tell me when he came back. "I told him Esther was my given name," Doris said in a whisper. "It's my least favorite name. But it's Biblical and Indians are all so religious, he likes it. He's pathetic, but he's a hoot."

Doris was staring at a door behind

the bar. There was a little circular glass window in the door, like a kitchen door in a restaurant. A man's big white face was in the window looking all around inside the bar from the back room. The man had on a big hat you could see part of the brim of. "Look at that," Doris said. She was staring right at the window, and the man's face was staring right at her. "What party is he looking for, do you suppose?"

The man's face was there another moment, then disappeared, but slowly the door opened and that man we'd just seen, with another man right behind him in the dark, looked into the bar. He had on a sheriff's uniform. He looked one way and then the other. He was holding a big silver pistol with a long barrel out in front of him, and he had on a heavy coat with a badge and heavy rubber boots with his pants tucked in the tops. The other man behind him was a sheriff, too, though he was younger, not much older than I was, and he had a short-barrel shotgun he was holding in two hands and high in front of him with the barrel pointed up.

Neither one of the men said anything. They just stepped very cautiously into the room, looking around as if they expected to be surprised by something. The little bartender saw them and went completely still, staring at them. And so did Doris and I. I heard one of the two or three Indians in the other part of the room say, "This machine loves me." Then I heard the front door of the bar push open and felt cold air flood in. And there were three more deputies outside, all wearing hats and heavy coats, all carrying short-barrel shotguns. None of the men looked at me or at Doris. They looked at all the Indians, and then around the room at each other, and then suddenly they seemed nervous, as if they didn't know what was about to happen themselves.

One of the men—and I don't know which one—said, "I don't see him, Neal, do you?"

The man with the pistol said, "Look in the bathroom."

And then Doris, for no reason at all, said, "Barney's in the bathroom." She pointed at where Barney had gone a few moments before.

Immediately then, as if that had been their signal, two of the deputies at the front door moved across the room on their tiptoes to the head of the little dark hallway where the pay phone and the rest-room door were. One deputy grabbed the man who had been talking on the phone, but had stopped talking and was just standing holding the receiver at his side, and pushed him out of the way. Both deputies got to either side of the hallway entrance and pointed their shotguns down toward where I guessed the rest-room door was. And then the three other deputies started whispering to us and motioning with their shotguns. "Get down on the floor, get down on the floor now," they said.

And we all did, all of us. I got on my belly and put my cheek on the wet floorboards and held my breath. Doris got down beside me. I could hear her breathing through her nose. She made a little grunting noise, and she grabbed my hand. Her glasses had come off and were lying on the floor, but she didn't say anything. Her eyes were shut, and I pulled myself close to her and put my arm over her, though I didn't see how I could protect her if something bad happened.

Someone then, and it must've been the man with the pistol, shouted in the loudest voice I'd ever heard, "Barney. God damn it. Come out of the bathroom. It's Neal Reiskamp. It's the Sheriff. I've got people out here with guns. So just come on out. You can't get away from me."

One of the deputies, who was close to me, moved quickly, almost jumped, over to where he could get the two in the doorway, and he pointed his shotgun into the hallway, too.

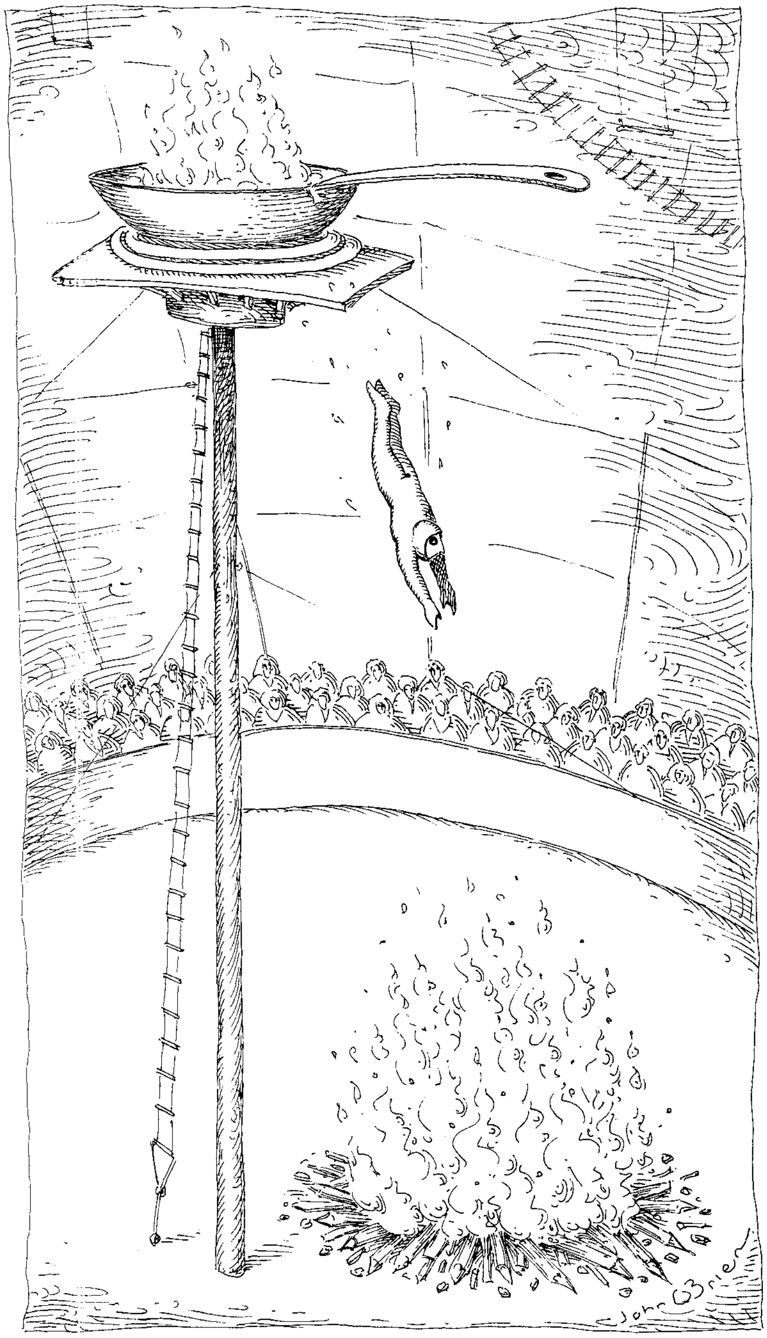
"Give me some light," the man who was the Sheriff shouted. "I can't see anything down there."

Another deputy ran out the front door then. It had been standing open with cold and snow blowing in. I heard his boots on the snow, then the sound of a car door opening. I didn't want to look up, but I could hear feet shifting and scuffling on the floor. The wood was hard on my cheek, and I tightened my arm around Doris until she made another little grunting noise, but she didn't open her eyes. The rotating beer sign over the jukebox flashed across the floor.

There were no sounds from Barney in the bathroom. And I wondered if he was even in there, or if he'd gone out a window or out another door, or even—and this felt like a dream I was dreaming—I wondered if he might've gone up through a trapdoor in the ceiling and into the attic and was on the floor above us all right then, in some deserted room in the dark, pacing around, trying to decide what to do, how to escape, how to come out of this in good shape. I even thought about his wife, about her being robbed of her money and her rings. Then I heard a noise like more feet scuffling, and the sound of something or somebody beating on something, a wall maybe. The deputy who'd gone outside ran back in with a long black flashlight.

"Shine the son of a bitch down there," the Sheriff said. "No. Up. Up more, God damn it." The pounding kept going on somewhere. Bang, bang. First it sounded like metal and then I heard glass break. Then more banging. "Barney!" the Sheriff yelled very loud. "Barney!" The banging kept on. The little bartender, who must've been on the floor behind the bar, began to make a high-pitched sound—"*eeee, eeee*," like that. I knew the banging had made her afraid, because it was making me afraid, and I could feel my jaw closed tight and both my fists were clenched. Then there was more of it—bang, bang, bang—and I looked up and saw that the two deputies were pointing their shotguns down the hallway at what I still couldn't see. Their legs were spread way apart, and the man with the flashlight was squatting down behind them, shining his light between one man's legs.

Doris said, "I'm all wet, Lawrence." She opened her eyes and stared at me, and wrinkled her nose up in a strange way. Then from the hallway where the deputies were looking and pointing their shotguns there was a very loud crashing, breaking sound, as if a door had been broken in or out. Then there was more noise that I couldn't identify, and I couldn't even say now what it was, though for some reason I thought Barney was kicking something, even though it was like a noise made by metal. But whatever it was, the deputy holding the flashlight suddenly jumped back out of the way, his light going crazy



across the ceiling, the long black barrel hitting the floor. And then both men who were holding shotguns shot almost at the same instant, right into the little hallway, into the dark. And the yellow flash of those two guns going off and the noise they made inside the barroom made me feel extremely cold, and my ears went deaf and there was pressure on my eyeballs from behind, and there was dust all over the room and dust falling out of the ceiling, and the smell of burned gunpowder. When the guns went off I felt Doris jump, and she squeezed my hand until her wedding ring cut down into my knuckle, and I couldn't get it free.

"O.K.," I heard Barney say to the policemen in a loud, odd voice, "I'm all shot up now. You shot me up. You shot me. I don't feel good now."

Two other deputies, ones who hadn't shot, ran into the little hallway, right in front of Doris and me, though a third one knelt beside the man who'd held the flashlight. That man said, "I'm all right. I'm not shot." His white hat was on the floor. I heard the bartender say, "Oh, my heavens," though I couldn't see her.

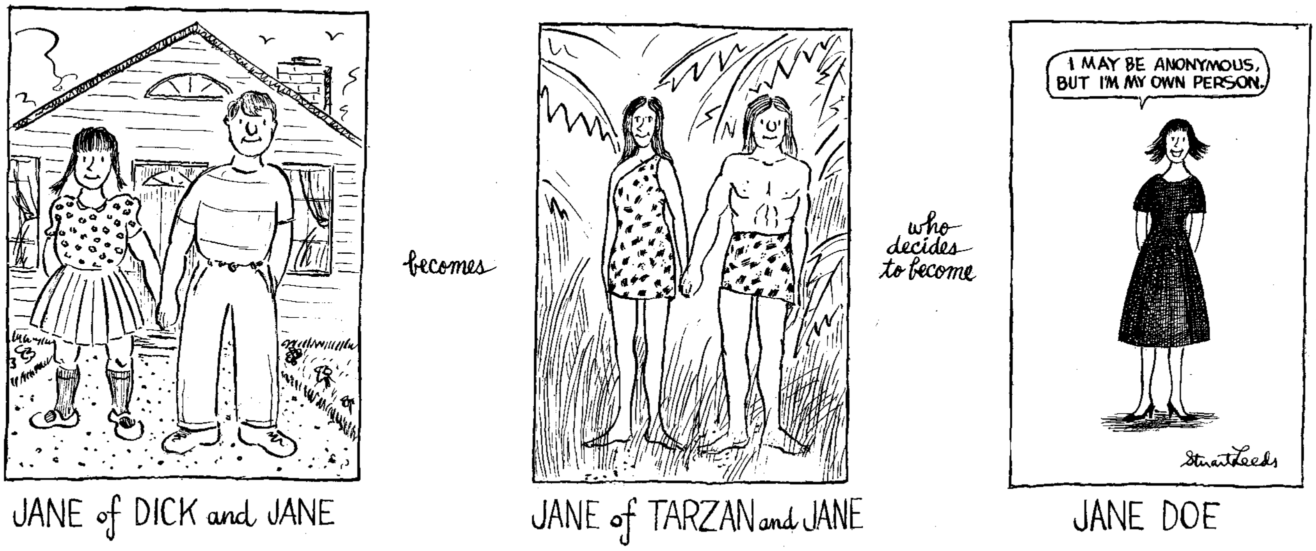
Then Barney—it must've been him—said, "How are you?" almost in a casual voice, then he yelled, "Ohhhhhh," and then he said, "Stop that! Stop that!" And he was quiet.

The two men who had shot Barney stayed where they were, pointing their guns into the little hallway. They had each ejected a shell, both of which were on the floor.

I heard the Sheriff, who was standing behind everybody, say very loudly, as if he was even more afraid now, "Careful. Be careful. He's not dead. He's just hit. He's just hit." One more deputy, who had been across the room, suddenly moved into the hallway in front of the men holding guns. "Barney, you son of a bitch," I heard him say, "stay down there now." But Barney didn't make any noise. I heard footsteps behind me and, when I looked, the Indians and the man who'd been talking on the phone were going out the front door. I saw car headlights outside, and from a distance I heard a siren, then the noise of a two-way radio and a woman's voice saying, "It probably is. But I can't be sure. You better check that out. Ten-four."

I looked at Doris, and her eyes were wide open, her cheek flat against the wet floor. Her mouth was drawn tight across, as if she thought something else might happen, but she had begun to loosen her grip on my hand. Her ring came off my knuckle, and she breathed very deeply and she said, "They killed that man. They shot him all to pieces." I didn't answer, because my jaw was still clenched and my ears felt hollow, and I thought that what she said was probably true. I was close to what had happened, yet I wasn't a real part of it. Everything had happened to Barney and the policemen who shot him, and I was better off, or so I felt, to stay as far away from it as I could and not even try to discuss it.

IN a few minutes one of the sheriff's deputies came and helped us stand up and go sit in the booth against the wall. There were a lot of police in the room all of a sudden. The front door stayed open, and two Montana Highway Patrolmen and more sheriff's deputies and two Indian policemen all came in and out. Other people were outside, I could hear their voices. More cars drove up with two-way radios going, and an ambulance arrived. Two men in orange jumpsuits came inside and went down the little hall carrying equipment in black boxes. I heard someone say, "*No problema aquí.*" And then the Sheriff said, "Go ahead and just sign all that now." Barney never said anything else I heard. Then, after a couple of minutes, the men from the ambulance left. One



becomes
who decides to become
I MAY BE ANONYMOUS, BUT I'M MY OWN PERSON.
Stuart Leeds
JANE of DICK and JANE
JANE of TARZAN and JANE
JANE DOE

HOW SHE GOT THAT WAY

• •

of them was smiling about something, but I didn't think it had to do with what had happened. It had to have been something else.

"I'm freezing," Doris said across the little table. "Aren't you?" She had found her glasses and put them back on and she was shivering. Almost immediately after she'd said it the same deputy came in and brought her a blanket and one for me, too, though I wasn't so cold, or didn't know I was. My nose was running, that was all, and the front of me was wet.

For some reason then, two deputies took the bartender away with them. I could hear them put her in a car, and heard it drive away. And then the ceiling lights in the bar were turned on, and a man came in with a camera and took pictures in the hallway, using a flash. He came out afterwards and took pictures of the room itself, one of which Doris and I were in, wrapped in our blankets.

In about ten minutes, while we sat waiting, two more ambulance men came in the door, and they had a folding stretcher on wheels. They pushed it into the hall, and I guess they picked Barney up and put him on, because when they pushed it out through the bar right by us, he was on it, covered up by a sheet with blood soaking through. One of the men was holding Barney's white Burlington Northern hard hat, and I could actually see part of Barney's ponytail out under the edge of the sheet. I was facing the other way, and I had to turn and look at all that. But Doris didn't. She sat with her blanket around her and looked down at the cup of coffee the deputy had brought. When the cart had gone by she said, "Was that him?"

I said, "Yes."

"I thought so," she said.

Then, after a few more minutes, a big man wearing a light-gray suit and Western boots and a Western hat came in and looked around the room. He looked very clean and neat and had pale-white skin and thin hair and a bad complexion, and at first he only glanced at us before he looked behind the bar and into the back room, where the deputies had come from. He looked down the hall where Barney had been, and into the bathroom—though I couldn't see him do that. He said something to the Sheriff, who had put his hat on again, then he brought a chair over to the booth and sat down at the end of the table in front of us.

He took out a little spiral pad and wrote something down on it with a ballpoint pen. Then he said, still writing, "I'm Walter Peterson, I'm the lawyer for Toole County. I'd like to find out some things from you people."

"We don't know anything," Doris said. "We don't live here. We're on our way to Seattle. We just stopped in here." She had her blanket wrapped up to her neck, and her fists were holding the edges together.

"Did you know the deceased man?" the lawyer said without answering Doris, and I realized that was what they were calling Barney now. The lawyer had a tiny pin on his coat lapel—a pair of silver handcuffs—and when he sat down I saw he was wearing a leather holster under his coat. He didn't take off his hat when he was talking to us.

"No," Doris said, "we didn't."

"Did *you* know him?" he said to me.

"No, sir," I said.

"Did either of you talk to him?" the lawyer said and wrote something in his little notebook.

"I *tried* to talk to him," Doris said. "Just practically by accident. But he didn't care to say much." She looked at me and then looked all around the barroom, which seemed larger and even dirtier with the ceiling lights on. "Was he carrying a gun of some kind?" she said. "I had the feeling he was."

"He didn't say anything about his wife?" the lawyer said.

"He said she'd been robbed at some point. He admitted that."

The lawyer stopped writing and looked at Doris as if he expected her to talk some more. Then he said, "Did he say anything else about that?" He began writing again, and I saw that he wrote with his left hand and in the regular way, not turned backwards.

"No, sir," Doris said. "He didn't. Lawrence, of course, wasn't here then. He came in just toward the end."

"The end of what?" the man said. He

had short thick hands with a big gold-and-red ring on one finger.

“At the end of the time we were sitting at the bar beside each other. Before he went to the bathroom.”

“What’s your name?” the lawyer said to me, and I told him. He asked Doris her name and wrote it down along with our addresses. He asked us what relation we were to each other, and Doris said she was my aunt and my mother was her sister. He looked at me as if he wanted to ask me something, then he ran the blunt end of his pen across his cheek, where his complexion was bad, and, I guess, changed his mind.

“Did the deceased say anything to either of you after he went to the bathroom?”

“He didn’t have time after that,” Doris said. “They shot him.”

“I see,” the lawyer said, though I remembered what Barney had said and how odd that had been, and that he intended to show me something when he got back. But I didn’t mention any of that. The lawyer wrote something else down and closed his notebook. He nodded and stuck his pen inside his coat. “If we have to call you, we’ll call you,” he said. He started to smile at Doris, then didn’t. “O.K.?” he said. He took two business cards out of his pocket and laid them on the tabletop. “I want you to keep my card and call me if you think of anything you want to add to your statements.”

“What was the matter with him?” Doris asked “He said he’d been in Fort Harrison, but I didn’t know whether to believe that or not.”

The lawyer stood up, put his notebook in his back pocket. “Him and his wife got in a set-to. That’s all I’ve heard over it. She’s missing at the moment.”

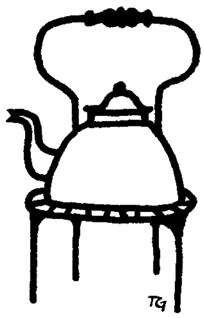
“I’m sorry that all happened,” Doris said.

“Are you both going to Seattle?” he said and he didn’t smile, though he said it to me.

“Yes,” Doris said. “His mother lives there.”

“It’ll be warmer over there than it’ll be here. You’ll like that,” he said. He looked around at one of the sheriff’s deputies who had been waiting for him to finish with us, then he just walked away, just walked toward that man and began talking beside the bar. Once he looked over at us as if he was talking about us, but in a minute he walked outside. I could hear his voice, then I heard a car start up and drive away.

Doris and I sat in the booth for ten more minutes while the deputies and a highway patrolman stood at the bar and talked. I thought I might go look at the place where Barney had gotten shot, but I didn’t want to get up by myself and I didn’t want to ask Doris to go with me, and after we’d sat there for a while longer Doris said, “I guess we’re free to go.” She stood up and folded her blanket and laid it on the table, and I stood up and folded mine the same way. She went to the bar and gathered up her money and her coat and her purse and keys. Barney’s work gloves were still on the bar, and I noticed that there was a pint bottle of whiskey on the floor under the stool Barney had been sitting on. One of the deputies was picking up the empty shotgun shells, and he said something to Doris and laughed, and Doris said, “I just stopped in for a drink,” and laughed herself. I walked quickly over to where the men with shotguns had seen down into the little hallway. And what I saw was the bathroom door knocked off of its top hinge and hanging on the bottom one, and bright light shining out of the bathroom. But nothing else. No holes in the wall or any marks anywhere. There wasn’t even any blood I could see, though I was sure there must’ve been blood someplace, since I’d seen it on the sheet when Barney had been taken out. It was just empty there, almost as if nothing had happened at all.



Doris walked over to me, putting things in her purse. “Let’s break out of this place,” she said and pulled my arm, and then the two of us walked out of the Oil City without saying anything to anybody else, and right out into the cold night where there was new snow and snow was still sifting down.

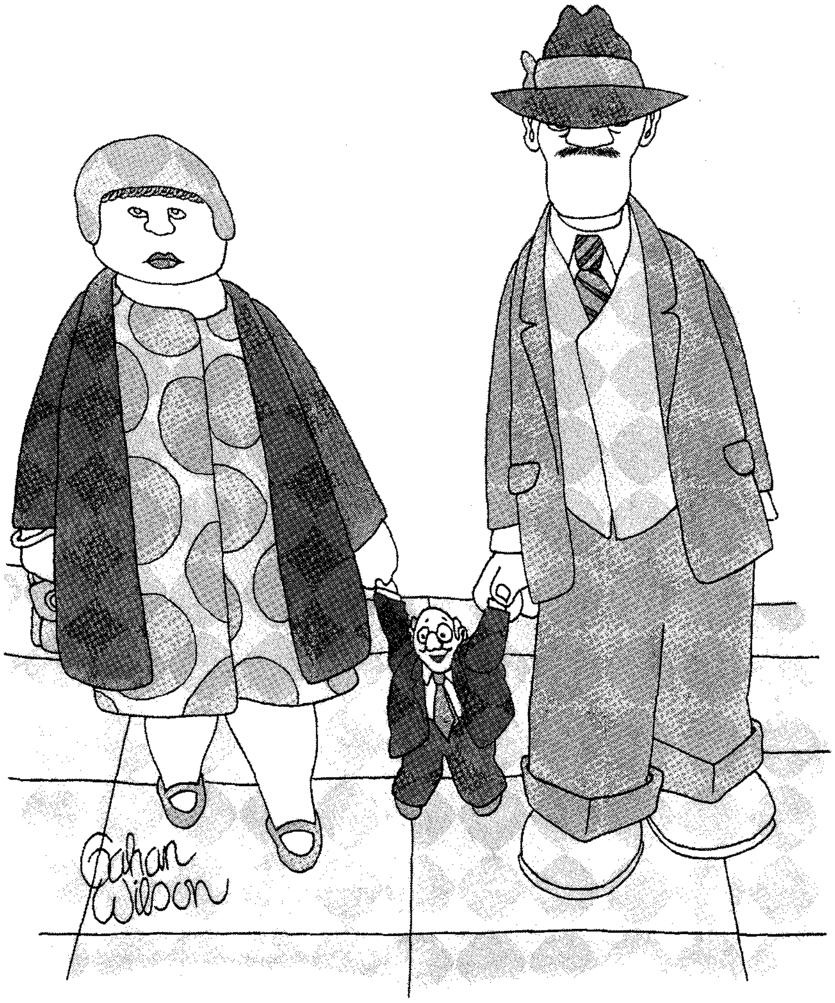
Outside, all the sounds were softened and I could hear better. Across the railroad yard were the dark backs of stores on the main street of Shelby, and between them I could see hanging Christmas lights and a big yellow motel sign and the lights of cars cruising up and back. I could hear car horns blowing and a switch-engine bell ringing in the dark. Two police cars sat parked at the bar with their motors running and their lights off, and two women stood in the snow across the street watching the door to see what would happen next. One of the boys I’d passed in the drugstore when I’d bought my mother’s watch was standing talking to the women, his hands stuck in his jacket pockets. I didn’t know what they thought would happen next, maybe that there would be some more excitement. But what I thought was that someone would come and close the bar soon and that would be all. I thought it might not even open again.

Doris just stopped on the sidewalk then and didn’t say anything. She crossed her arms and put her hands under them to get warm. Her chin was down, her red patent-leather shoes were covered with snow. She seemed to be considering something that hadn’t occurred to her until she was outside. We were facing the depot, farther down the street, its windows lit. The taxi that had been in front of the Oil City was parked there now, its green roof light shining dimly. Other cars had arrived, so that I couldn’t see Doris’s car. My own feet were starting to be cold, and I wanted to go on to the depot and wait inside for the train. There was only an hour left until it came.

“That was *such* a goddam unlucky thing, it just makes me sick,” Doris said, and bunched her shoulders and pulled her elbows in. “Of course, it’s not what happens, it’s what you do with what happens.” She looked around at the two other bars on the block, which looked exactly like the Oil City—dark, wood fronts with red bar signs in the windows. “I’ve got snakes in my boots right now,” she said, “which is what the Irishman says.” And she spit. She spit right in the street in the snow. I had never seen a woman do that. “Did you ever hear your dad say he had snakes in his boots when he was drinking?”

“No,” I said.

“It means you need another drink. But I don’t think I can approach one more bar tonight. I need to go sit in my car and regain my composition.” In the Oil City the jukebox started up,



"Wow! Wait'll I tell Dr. Feldman about this dream!"

loud music bursting into the street. "Can you stand to sit with me? You can go wait in the depot if you want to." She smiled at me, a smile that made me feel sorry for her. I thought she must've felt bad about Barney and must've thought she was responsible for what happened.

On the platform beside the depot two men in heavy coats were standing talking, moving from foot to foot. A switch engine moved slowly past them. I wanted to go inside there and get warm. But I said, "No, I'll come with you."

"We don't have to stay very long," Doris said. "I just don't want to see anybody for a while. I'll calm down in a minute or two. O.K.?" She started walking up the middle of the street. "Everyday acts of heroism are appreciated," she said as she walked, and she smiled at me again.

Doris's pink car was covered with snow and was down among the other cars that had arrived behind the depot. She started the motor right away and turned the heater up but didn't wipe the windshield, so that we sat in the cold while the heater blew cold air on our feet, and couldn't see out, could only see the blurred lights of the depot as if they were painted on the frosted window.

Doris put her hands in her lap and shivered and stamped her feet and put her chin down and blew ice smoke. I just sat and didn't talk. I put my hands in my pockets and tried to be still until I could feel the air start to blow warm. The front of my coat was still wet.

"Double shivers," Doris said, pushing her chin farther down into her coat. She looked pale, as if she'd been sick, and her face seemed small and her eyes tired. "You know when you watch TV on New Year's Day and all the soap-opera characters stop in the middle of their programs and turn to the camera and wish you Happy New Year's? Did you ever see that?"

"No," I said, because I had never watched soap operas.

"Well, they do it. Take my word for it," Doris said. "But it's my favorite moment of the whole year for the soaps. I watch it religiously. They just step out for a second, then they step right back in and go on. It's wonderful."

"We watch football that day," I said and clenched my toes down, because I was cold and was wondering if exhaust fumes were getting inside. I tried to feel if I was getting sleepy, but I wasn't sleepy. My jaw was still stiff, but I could feel my heart beating hard in my chest as if I'd been running, and my legs were tingling above my knees.

"Is that what you care about? Football?" Doris said after a while.

"No," I said. "Not anymore."

"You're all ready to start life now, I guess."

"I already started," I said.

"You certainly did tonight." Doris reached for the schnapps bottle, where she'd left it on the floor, and unscrewed the cap and took a drink. "I've got a sour taste," she said. "You want to drink a toast to poor old Barney?" She handed the bottle to me, and I could smell it.

"No, thanks," I said and didn't take it.

"Honor the poor dead and our absent friends," she said and took another drink. The heater was blowing warm now.

"Why did you say to the police that he was in the bathroom?" I said.

"I didn't mean that to happen," Doris said, holding the bottle up to the depot lights. "If they'd spoken to him in the Indian tongue none of it would've ever taken place. They just didn't speak it. It was a matter of mutual distrust." She said something then in what must've been the Indian tongue—something that sounded like reading words backwards, not like something you heard wrong or mistook the meaning of. "Do you know what that means?"

"No," I said.

"It means 'Come out with your hands up and I won't kill you' in the Gros Ventre language. Or it means something like that. They don't really have a word for 'hands up.' Barney could've understood that if he'd been a Gros Ventre."

"Why'd you tell them that, though?" I said, because I thought maybe Barney would've survived if he hadn't gotten trapped in there and gotten scared. He could be in jail now asleep, instead of dead.

"I didn't mean him to get shot." Doris looked at me as if she was surprised. "Do you think I'm rotten because I did that?"

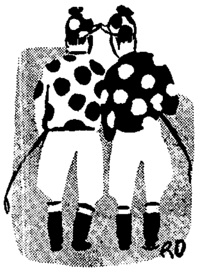
"No," I said, though that wasn't exactly the truth.

"He murdered his wife. I'm sure of that. They'll find her someplace over in Browning tonight beat to death or stabbed or burned up in a ditch. That's what happens. She probably had a boyfriend. The police were already looking for him, I knew that the instant he sat down beside me. People get a smell on them." She blew more ice breath in the air. "I don't think the heater's working too hot." She turned the knob around and back. "Feel my hands." She put her small hands together and shoved them toward me, and they were cold and hard-feeling. "They're my prettiest feature, I believe," Doris said, looking at her hands. She looked at my hands then, and touched the place where her wedding ring had worked into my knuckle. "Your skin's *your* nicest feature," she said and she looked at my face. "You look like your mother, and you have your father's skin. You'll probably look like him eventually." She pushed closer to me. "I'm so cold, baby," she said and held her two hands still clasped together against my chest and put her face against my cheek. The skin on her face was cold and stiff and not very soft, the way her hands felt, and the frames of her glasses were cold, too. There was a smell of sweat in her hair. "I feel numb, and you're so warm. Your face is warm." She kept her cheek against my cheek, so I could feel that mine was warm. "You need to warm me up," she whispered. "Are you brave enough to do that? Or are you a coward on that subject?" She put her hands around my neck and below my collar, and I did not know what to do with my hands, though I put them around her and began to pull her close to me and felt her weight come against my weight, and her legs press on my cold legs. I felt her ribs and her back—hard, the way they'd felt when we'd been on the floor in the bar. I felt her breathing under her coat, could smell on her breath what she'd just been drinking. I closed my eyes, and she said to me, almost as if she was sorry about something, "Oh, my. You've just got everything, don't you? You've just got everything."

"What?" I said. "What is it?"

And she said, "No, no." That was all she said. And then she didn't talk to me anymore.

ON the train I sat facing Doris as the empty, dark world went by outside our compartment in a snowy stream. She had washed her face and cleaned her glasses and put on perfume, and her face had color in it, and she looked nice, though the front of her red dress had stains from where we'd had to lie down on the bar floor in the wet. We sat and looked out the window for a while, not talking, and I saw that Doris had taken off her stockings and her earrings, and that her hands *were* pretty. Her fingers were long and thin, and there was no polish on her fingernails. They looked natural.



In the depot I had called my father. I thought I should tell him about Barney and what had happened and say that I was all right, though I knew I could explain it wrong and he could decide to come and get me, and I wouldn't get to Seattle finally, or ever get to see my mother.

The phone rang a long time, and when my father answered it he seemed out of breath, as if he'd been running or had come in from outside. "It's snowing in Montana, bud," he said, catching his wind. I heard him stamp his feet on the floor. "It feels like you've been gone a long time already."

"We're still in Shelby," I said. "It's snowing here, too." Doris was at the ticket desk talking to the woman I had talked to—Betty. I knew they were talking about Barney. There were other people in the waiting room now, with suitcases and paper packages, and it was noisy. "We saw a man get shot up in a bar tonight," I said to my father, just like that.

"What is it?" my father said as if he hadn't heard me right. "What's it you said?"

"The police did it," I said.

"Where's Doris?" my father said. "Put her on." And I knew that what I'd said had shocked him. "Where are you?" he said, and his voice sounded scared.

"In Shelby," I said. "In the depot. I was on the floor with Doris. Nothing happened to us."

"Where's she now, son?" my father said and suddenly seemed very calm. "Let me speak to her now."

"She's talking to somebody," I said. "She can't come to the phone."

"Are the police there?" my father said, and I knew he was thinking right then about coming up and getting me and taking me back. But it was snowing too hard, and the train would get here before he could arrive.

"We were in the Oil City bar," I said and I said it calmly. "It wasn't somebody we knew. It was an Indian."

"What in the world's going on now?" my father said, and he said this loudly, so that I wondered if he'd had a drink. "Was she with somebody?" he said.

"No," I said, "she wasn't. It's all right now. It's finished."

And then there was a long time on the line, during which my father didn't say anything but I could hear his feet moving on the floor and hear him still breathing hard, and I knew he was trying to think what he should do at that moment.

"I can't save you from very much, can I?" I heard him say softly, as if he didn't care if I heard it or maybe didn't even want me to. And I didn't answer, as if I was waiting for him to say something he wanted me to hear. I tried thinking of something to ask, but I didn't want to know anything. Telling him what had happened had made anything else not important.

And then he said, and he said it more loudly, as if he had a different attitude suddenly, "Are you all right?"

"Yes, sir," I said.

He waited for a moment longer. "Your mother called up here tonight."

"What did she say?" I asked.

"She wanted to know if you'd gotten away all right, and how you felt. She asked me if I wished I was coming with you, and I told her she'd need to ask me earlier if she wanted that to happen. I said I had other plans."

"Is Jensen there?" And I called her by her last name. I don't know why.

My father laughed. "Yoyce? No. Miss Yensen's got other visitors tonight. It's just us hounds in the house. I let them both in. They're searching around for you right now."

"You don't have to worry about me," I said.

"All right, I'll quit then," my father said. He paused again. "Your mother said she might try to keep you out there. So don't be surprised."

"What did you say to her about it?" I asked.

"I said O.K. It was up to you. Not me."

"What did she say then?"

"Nothing," he said. "Not about that." And then I decided he hadn't had a drink. "Before you called I was just sitting thinking about when I was your age. My parents had several big dustups—yelling and everything. Fighting. My dad once got my mother up against a wall in the house and threatened to hit her because he'd invited over some friends of his from Moorhead, and she didn't like them and told them to get out. I had a good seat for that. Nobody moved away, though. And that's better than all this foolishness. I don't know what *you're* supposed to do about it, of course."

Doris looked at me across the waiting room and smiled and waved. She pointed her finger at herself, but I didn't want her to talk to my father. "Do you remember when you said Doris was sympathetic?" I said, watching Doris. "You were talking about her one day. I wondered what you meant by that."

"Oh," my father said, and I heard one of the dogs bark, and he shouted out, "Hey now! Dogs!" Then he said, "I must've meant she was generous with her affections. With me, she was. That's all. Why'd you think about that? Is she nice to you?"

"Yes," I said, "she is." Then I said, "Do you think it'd be better if I stay out with Mother?"

"Well," my father said, "only if you want to. I wouldn't blame you. Seattle's a nice place. But I'm happy to have you come back here. We should talk about that when you've been there. You'll know something about it."

"O.K.," I said.

I heard a dog's collar jingling, and I thought he was probably petting one of them. "Are you sure you're all right?" my father said.

"I'm fine," I said. "I am."

"I love you, Larry. I forgot to tell you that before you left. That's important."

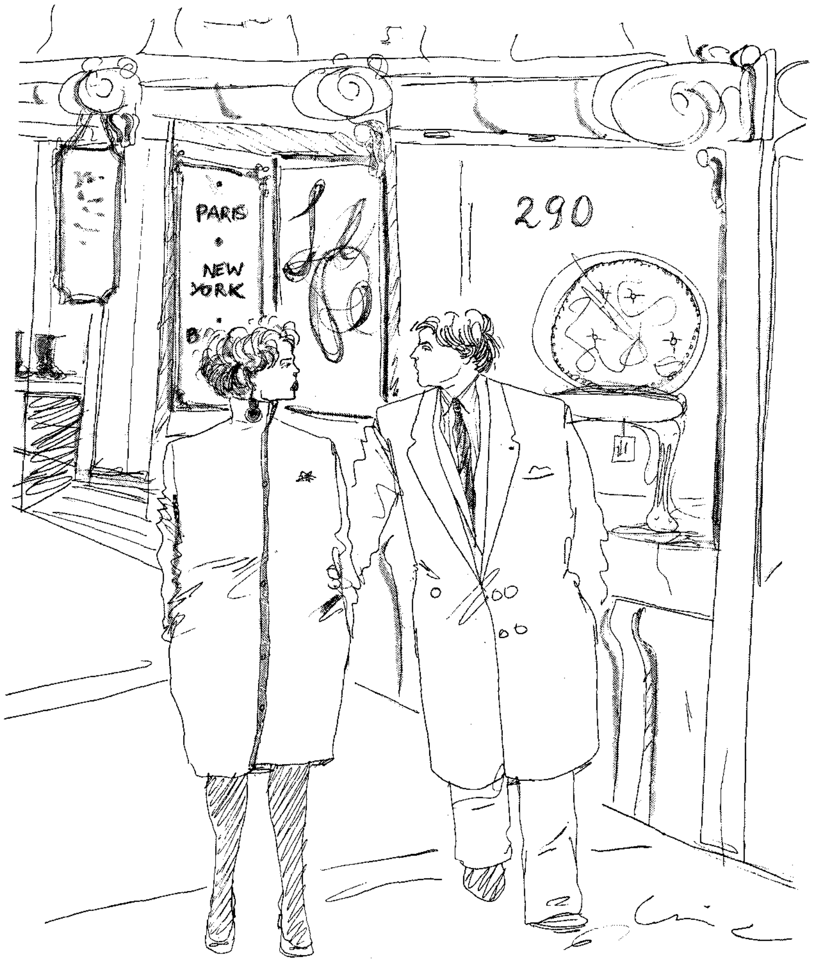
"I love you," I said.

"That's good news," he said. "Thank you."

And then we hung up.

AFTER an hour of watching the night go by—the town of Cut Bank, Montana, a few cars there, some bright headlights behind a flashing, snowy barricade and a road sign toward Santa Rita and the Canada border, then a long, dark time while the train ran by the highway and there were no cars, only a farm light or two in the distance and a missile site off alone in the dark and the few trucks racing to get home by Thanksgiving—after an hour of that, Doris began to talk to me, just to say whatever was in her mind, as if she thought I might be interested. Her voice sounded different in the compartment. It had lost a thickness it'd had, and was just one note, a plain voice that only meant one thing.

She remarked that the town of Shelby still felt very foreign to her, and that it reminded her of Las Vegas, Nevada, where she and Benny had gotten married. She said both were remote from any place important and both were unpredictable—unlike Great Falls, which she said was too predictable. She said she knew the sheriffs had not intended to shoot Barney, that they would've done anything to avoid it but that they didn't know enough. Then she said again that she was the wrong person for my father, and that there were important things she'd always wanted to say to my mother, things she thought about her—some good, some not—but



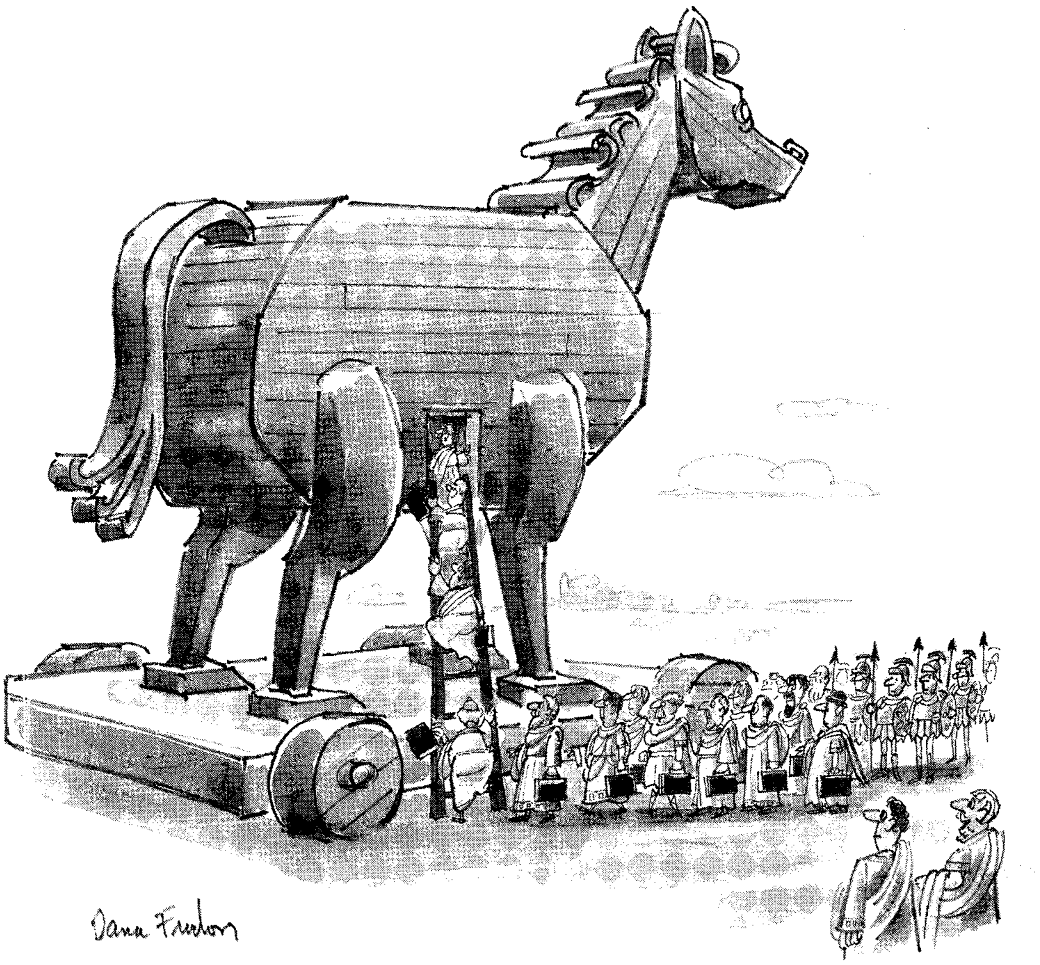
"I bet if Frank Rich reviewed us he would say the sets were great, but that's it."

that she could never express them, because my mother had locked on her as a rival years before. Then she talked about how it would feel to be divorced, that the worst part of that would be your thinking, not being able to control what went through your mind all the time, and that the next day, Thanksgiving Day, she was going to tell my mother to come home right then, or else run the risk of being on her own forever. "Your life'll eat you." Those were the words she said. And then she leaned back in her seat and looked at me.

"I was involved with another woman for a while. Quite a while, in fact. It was very fulfilling," she said. "Though I'm not now. Not anymore. Does that shock you to know?"

"No," I said, although it did. It shocked me very much.

"I'm sure it does," Doris said. "It shocked me. But you couldn't admit that. It's not how you're made. You don't really know how to trust people with the truth. You're like your father." She took her glasses off and smoothed under her eyes with the tips of her fingers.



"We're going to try to negotiate first."

"I can tell the truth," I said, and I wanted to be able to. I didn't want to be a person who couldn't tell the truth, though I didn't want to tell Doris I was shocked by what she'd said.

"It doesn't matter," she said, and smiled at me in a way she had earlier that day, as though she liked me and I could trust her. She put her glasses back on very carefully. "Did you buy a nice present for your mom? I bet you have good taste."

"I bought her a watch," I said.

"You did?" Doris leaned forward. "Let me see it." She seemed pleased about that.

I reached in the pocket of my coat, which was beside me on the seat and also had the lawyer's card in it, and took out the watch, its little clear-plastic box wrapped in white tissue, and unfolded it so Doris could look. She took the box and opened it and picked up the watch with its little moving hand ticking seconds by—I could almost hear it—and she looked at it very closely, then put it up to her ear. "O.K.," she said and smiled at me. "It works. I wish somebody would give me a watch." Then she put it back in my hand. "Jan'll love that," she said as I folded it away. "It's the perfect gift. You're such a sweet boy." She took my cheeks between her warm hands and squeezed me, and I thought she was going to kiss me, but she didn't. "Too bad there aren't sweet boys like you everywhere," she said. She sat back on her seat and put her hands in her lap and closed her eyes, and I believe she must've gone to sleep for a minute. Though after a while she said, with her eyes still closed and the dark snowy night flashing by outside the window, "I wish there were Thanksgiving carols so we could sing a song now." And then she did go to sleep, because her breath slowed and evened, and her head sank over her chest and her hands were still and limp.

And for a long time then I sat very still and felt as though I was out of the world entirely, cast off without a starting or a stopping point, just shooting through space like a boy in a rocket. And after a while I must have begun to hold my breath, because my heart began to beat harder, and I had that feeling, that scary feeling you have that you are suffocating and that your life is running out—fast, fast, second by second—and you have to do something to save yourself right then. And then you remember it's only you who's causing it, and you who has to stop it. And then it stopped, and I could breathe again. I looked out the window at the night where the clouds had risen and dispersed and the snow was finished off, and the sky above the vast white ground was soft as softest velvet. And I felt calm. Maybe for the first time in my life, I felt calm. So that for a while then I, too, closed my eyes and slept. ♦

PROFILE

THE CHINOS' ARTFUL HARVEST

by Mark Singer

The woman arrived in a metallic-blue Chevy van with all the options. She wanted corn. She parked under a Torrey pine next to an irrigation pump, walked toward the wooden roadside vegetable stand, and said, "*Corn.*"

"No," said the man behind the counter. She was wearing Gucci sweatclothes; he was wearing a red-white-and-black plaid flannel shirt and faded Levi's. Between them stretched a vinyl countertop twenty-five feet long and three feet wide, covered with stainless-steel trays of neatly arranged beets (yellow, golden, red, white with red stripes), carrots (white, orange, yellow, red, long-and-tapered, thumb size, in-between), turnips (white, golden, red, black, white-and-purple, round, long), radishes (white, red, red-and-white, purple, pink, daikon, red-fleshed Chinese, green-fleshed Chinese), celeriac, fennel, escarole, white endive, red endive, white cauliflower, Romanesque cauliflower (pale green with a stegosauroid architecture), mibuna, mizuna, bok choy, choi sun, cilantro, French thyme, winter savory, lemon balm, rappini, garlic chives, nasturtiums, basil (lemon, cinnamon, Thai, French, piccolo fino), Vietnamese coriander, Chinese spinach, Chinese long beans, French green beans as slender as candlewicks, purple cabbage, green cabbage, flat black cabbage, two dozen varieties of lettuce, a plastic tray of mixed lettuce hearts—and that's not all.

"How soon?" she asked, as if she might wait.

"May."

There would be corn in late May, in three months. As she drove away, the man said, "People have no conception of what's in season anymore. At the supermarket, everything is in season all the time. And everything tastes out of season all the time."

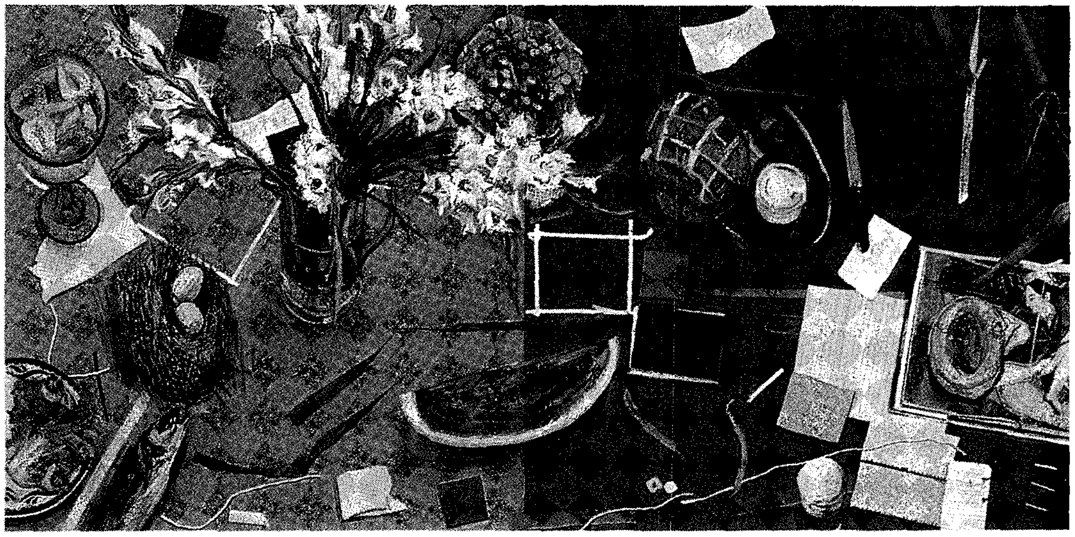
A black Chrysler Le Baron arrived, and a crisply tailored red-haired woman stepped out: crimson linen skirt and blazer, white silk blouse, and an American-flag brooch of rubies, sapphires, and diamonds. She had a forced smile that suggested an unsureness of the protocol. She was also unsure which of the variegated root crops were carrots, beets, radishes, or turnips.

Tom Haruya Chino, the man in the flannel shirt and Levi's, could have put her at ease, but he said nothing. Forty-three years ago, he was born fifty yards west of here. The roadside stand officially does business as the Vegetable Shop, but regulars call it the Chinos'. It sits on the periphery of a fifty-six-acre farm twenty-one miles north of San Diego and five miles from the Pacific. Tom, who was born in 1949 and has spent all but four years of his life on the farm, is the youngest of nine children, all nisei—second-generation Japanese-Americans. His active business partners are a sister, Kazumi, and two brothers, Koo and Fumio. The world outside the family knows Kazumi as Kay, Koo as Frank, and Fumio as Fred.

Though the Vegetable Shop's mailing address is Del Mar, the nearest post office is actually in Rancho Santa Fe. Given that the Chinos are devoting their lives to an obsessive and luxurious endeavor—producing vegetables far too special to be treated the way venders typically treat vegetables—they could not have picked a more rewarding neighborhood for a roadside retail operation. When economic recession grips Rancho Santa Fe, the real-estate listings in the local newspaper say "Priced for Quick Sale—$1,650,000" and "Escape from Mediocrity—$1,895,000." The Vegetable Shop has the approximate dimensions of a recreational vehicle, four doors, four plywood shutters that are unlatched during business hours, plenty of counter space and shelf space, a concrete floor, and a pale-yellow paint job with white trim. A mulberry, a mimosa, and a Chinese umbrella tree provide shade. A hand-lettered sign above one of the shutters indicates the hours: open at 10 A.M. six days a week, closed Mondays. On this particular day, a Sunday, closing time was noon, half an hour away.

The red-haired woman contemplated the beets, carrots, and turnips for a full three minutes, in awkward silence. Finally, she tried what she hoped would be an effective conversation starter: "So which one of these would be best just for snacking?"

Next came a petite white-haired woman wearing a red Ralph Lauren cardigan, white slacks, and a belt with a gold buckle about the size of the one the world



"THE STORY OF THE EYE" BY MANNY FARBER, COLLECTION OF heavyweight boxing champion poses in. "Cucumbers?" she asked. She used her hands to describe what one looked like—a gesture implying that Tom Chino probably didn't speak much English.

"No. There are no cucumbers left." Within the month, the Chinos would plant five varieties of cucumbers in the field, and in mid-April they'd begin harvesting them.

The woman saw leafy greens in a plastic bin and asked what they were.

"Lettuce hearts."

"Oh, they look so clean. You mean I don't have to do anything? Just pour dressing on them?"

"You might dry them first," Tom said.

"Just dry them in the air?"

Tom explained the concept of salad spinners and volunteered that paper towels were also an option.

"What about fruit?"

There were strawberries earlier in the day, he said, and there would be more on Tuesday.

"*Your* strawberries?"

If the Chinos sell it, the Chinos have raised it and, that very day, picked it.

"Yes." He turned down the corners of his mouth, as if reminding himself of the virtue of tact. "*Our* strawberries."

Watching him bag eight dollars' worth of lettuce hearts, I experienced a surge of pride. Four hours earlier, in the lettuce field of the Chino farm, he had given me explicit instructions: "Only the hearts." I had a twelve-inch carbon-steel kitchen knife. We were surrounded by rigorously straight lines of crops. I bent over a head of rosalita, a red romaine, severed its roots, extracted it, and peeled the outer leaves until I was down to a dozen pristine lime-and-pink petals, the longest about four inches.

"Is this small enough?" I asked.

"Not by my standards," Tom said. He has a soft-edged, often barely audible voice.

I ate four of the outer leaves, tossed the heart of the heart into a rectangular plastic tray, and went about harvesting and stripping another and another.

"We've got so much of this lettuce," he said. "So we can sell the hearts. Only the hearts."

As a percentage of California's gross agricultural revenue, what the Chinos produce is infinitesimal. If their farm were to cease to exist, however, along with it would disappear possibly a hundred per cent of the state's commercial production of directly marketed lettuce hearts, Iranian basil, Japanese yellow carrots and red carrots, Japanese seedless yellow watermelons, Chinese red-fleshed radishes, purple-striped French green beans, and white alpine strawberries. The deed to the farm, dated 1952, describes a vaguely trapezoidal coastal floodplain, bounded by roads on three sides and by the San Dieguito River on the other. Minus the land occupied by buildings and paved areas, and minus a cornfield that the river swallowed during a flood in 1979, there are forty-five arable acres. More than eight million of California's acres are cultivated for agriculture. It is the state's leading resource industry, and this year it will generate revenues of eighteen billion dollars. At least ninety-five per cent of the crops are sold through brokers. The Chinos sell their crops to the public at the Vegetable Shop, and they also sell to a handful of restaurants. Nobody gets a volume discount.

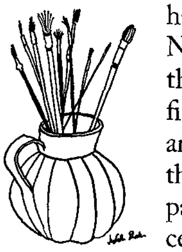
Several years ago, one of my brothers married Alice Waters, whose restaurant, Chez Panisse, in Berkeley, occupies approximately the same place in the new American cooking as does the golden arch in the old American fast food. The most telling measure of the Chinos' esteem for my sister-in-law is that every Wednesday several bushels of their vegetables wind up in the kitchen of Chez Panisse.

"I was absolutely dazzled the first time I saw the Chinos' vegetables," Alice said recently. "It was the most beautiful produce I had ever seen. Now, after years of knowing—or trying to know—this remarkable family, I see that the beauty of those vegetables comes from a commitment to tradition and integrity that is very rare and precious. Their vegetables are endless sources of inspiration, and their standards and approach have changed the way cooks regard vegetables."

A weekly shipment also goes from Del Mar to West Hollywood—to Spago, the flagship of Wolfgang Puck's cooking empire. A Spago dish called the Chino Ranch Chopped Salad—a mélange of corn kernels, diced artichokes, carrots, green beans, red onions, tomatoes, avocados, and radicchio, all dressed with a sherry-wine vinaigrette and presented on a bed of mixed lettuces—is one of the most popular items on the menu. Chino Ranch Chopped Salad also turns up on the menus of a number of California restaurants whose proprietors have never done business with the Chinos, or even necessarily laid eyes on a raw intact

Chino vegetable. An analogy would be a bottler of Oregon cabernet sauvignon's slapping a Château Lafite label on his product, in homage.

Alice Waters and Wolfgang Puck have promulgated the notion that if you are going to grow vegetables you might as well grow Chino vegetables or not bother. The Chinos are aware of their important role within the California food culture. They work six and a half days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. They have made of the farm a separate sovereignty, a life and enterprise totally outside the mainstream. The Vegetable Shop is, in effect, a proscenium beyond which they feel no special need to venture.



Manny Farber, the painter/critic/teacher/éminence grise, lives and works in Leucadia, a couple of towns up the coast from Del Mar. "It wouldn't be possible anywhere else," Manny told me over dinner one evening. "The Chinos are selling to rich people who have some aestheticism behind their money." Chino vegetables—bunches of beets and carrots and leeks, fennel bulbs, tomatoes, melons—have turned up as compositional elements in many of Manny's recent sprawling, richly colored and textured oil still-lifes. His wife, Patricia Patterson, has painted landscapes of the Chinos' fields.

"In visual terms, the difference between the Chinos' vegetables and all other vegetables is a total difference," Manny said. "They grow vegetables that are charismatically way beyond anyone else's, both in size and in color. They have nothing in common with what you find at Ralph's. Even when they're decaying, they're that way. All those midget vegetables and all the variety—they're growing lorgnette vegetables, ones you'd examine that way. I'm sure the whole process has to do with the most exquisite kind of putting together, and I'm sure they hide that like bloody murder from other farmers."

ONE Sunday, I was invited to lunch at the Chino farm. The living quarters have been cobbled together from an assortment of prewar one-story wood-frame-and-clapboard structures. In a hodgepodge manner, the buildings radiate from a brick-paved rectangular courtyard. The courtyard runs north to south. At the south end stands the only traditional Japanese building on the property—a cedar bathhouse, which is reached by a footbridge over a small pond filled with ivory and red-orange koi. At the north end is the only contemporary-looking building—yellow cinder block with sliding glass doors. It contains most of the Chinos' business files, and also a computer system, a photocopier, and a fax machine.

The main house, to the west, where Junzo Chino, the patriarch, lived, with his wife, Hatsuyo, is painted yellow and has a green asphalt-shingle roof. Near the entrance is a large cage that houses half a dozen goldfinches. I removed my sneakers and put them on a bench, beyond the range of Toby and Tommy, a pair of Jack Russell terriers. A low-ceilinged L-shaped space functions as both a kitchen and a family room. Japanese watercolors and calligraphy hang on the walls, along with a poster-size color photograph of Dolly Parton. A meal that Kay had prepared—roast chicken, mesclun salad, steamed broccoli, rice, salt salmon, green tea, banana cake—was set out on a pair of Formica-veneered tables. Frank and Fred drifted in, ate, amiably forgave some breaches of etiquette that I committed in the handling of my chopsticks, and then headed back to work.

Their mother, Hatsuyo, who had been afflicted by a series of strokes, lay on a sofa with her eyes closed. A small television stood on an end table next to her, and across the room were a huge television screen, a videocassette recorder, and a laser video-disk player. An open doorway led to Hatsuyo's bedroom. Tom escorted me there and showed me the butsudan, an ancestral altar, that stood on her dresser. A photograph of Junzo, a gentle-looking, faintly smiling man with black-framed, thick eyeglasses, white hair, and impressively large ears, stood on one shelf of the butsudan, and on another shelf was a painting of the Buddha. Junzo died in November of 1990, at the age of ninety-six, and two months later Tom, Kay, Hatsuyo, and several other family members travelled to Hashiguii, a small fishing village and resort community at the southern tip of Honshu, Japan's main island, to inter a portion of his ashes. Hashiguii was Junzo's birthplace; in the late sixties, he and Hatsuyo had begun making annual visits, and they later built a seaside house there.

Though Tom is the youngest of seven sons, he is now, in some respects, the head of the family. Neither he nor his siblings can articulate how this came about, just as they cannot really explain how their clearly delineated roles in the life of the farm have developed. For instance, only Frank drives the Caterpillar D4E tractor, which he uses for disking, plowing, and levelling. A family friend has described Frank as the Leonardo da Vinci of the big tractor. In effect, Frank is also the marketing manager; only Kay spends more time behind the counter of the Vegetable Shop. The more delicate tractor work—cultivating and furrowing out—is done by Fred. Kay attends to matters in the greenhouses—a quarter of an acre of seedlings, herbs, flowers, cucumbers, and tomatoes—and organizes the main house, cooks meals, keeps the payroll and other employee-related records, pays bills, and balances the checkbook.

Not one of the farm partners looks like a close blood relative of the others. Kay is petite and has a round face and pale skin, a shy, pixieish smile, and short, attractively graying hair. Usually, she dresses all in black. Most days, Fred wears aviator sunglasses, shorts, and a T-shirt that looks ready for the rag bin. Whenever possible, he goes barefoot. He has waist-length straight black hair and a deep tan—he could easily be taken for a Native American—and an ample belly. Frank has inherited his father's lean and graceful physique. His Levi's and button-down Brooks Brothers shirts are always crisply pressed, and he has a fashion-catalogue cool and handsomeness. Tom has a compact build, a fleshy face, deep dark crinkly eyes, jug ears, and, despite the fact that he never goes into the field without a baseball cap, a sunbaked complexion. He dresses in a rumpled Eddie Bauerish style.

Tom, who got married a few years ago, lives, with his wife and their young son, in Encinitas, a fifteen-minute commute. Neither Kay nor Frank nor Fred has ever married, and all three live on the farm. (Another brother, Junji, also lives there, but he works full time for San Diego County.) Most of Tom's workday is spent in the fields, overseeing a crew of about a dozen migrants from Oaxaca, Mexico, and four Japanese trainees; since 1953, groups of agriculture students have been coming to Del Mar from Japan and Brazil as part of an exchange program that Junzo helped organize. Because Tom is also a regular presence in the Vegetable Shop—he monitors the field crews by walkie-talkie—and has tended to speak for the Chinos on those occasions when the Chinos have deigned to speak to the public, most outsiders have the impression that he is the boss. He holds the title of president of Chino Nojo, Inc., the family's corporate entity, but in a practical sense there seems to be no single boss.

When people who have observed the Chinos closely over the years are asked to explain how all this evolved, they tend to fall back on the phrase "very Japanese." Tom, who is an omnivorous reader, owns a large collection of books about Japanese history and culture. At the time of Junzo's death, his siblings deferred to him, because of his deep knowledge of the ordained rituals. Tom's reverence for the elegantly systematic process of mourning ran parallel to his methodology as a farmer. The coalescing of science, art, and ritual is, of course, commonly regarded as "very Japanese." It was natural, therefore, that during the months of Junzo's final illness Tom—the only partner in the farm who has a child—began to assume the role of patriarch.

"The Chinos never tell you anything," Wolfgang Puck has said. "They only ask questions. They ask questions and they read, and that's how, without actually going anywhere, they know what's going on everywhere. They think what they think. You'll be at the stand and a customer will come up and say, 'I just came back from New York. I went to David Bouley's restaurant the other night.' They ask, 'What did you eat?' Item by item, bite by bite, they want to know everything. They ask, 'What did you like the most? What didn't you like? What were the ingredients?' What the Chinos do doesn't involve magic. It comes from tenacity, hard work, some talent, and some love. If there is a magic with the Chinos, I think the magic is that every day they're getting up at five in the morning and working so hard. To see a family like that, doing what they do—I think it's such an amazing thing. Whatever it costs me to buy from them, it doesn't matter. I don't know what anything costs. I just know that they grow it and I want it."

Puck thinks that a combination of lucky accidents, including factors that could have been adverse, have contributed to the Chinos' success, as if the farm itself were a delicate organism that could thrive in no other microclimate. Ten miles farther inland, the daytime temperature runs from eight to ten degrees higher. The morning air humidity at the farm averages around forty per cent—compared with about eighty-five per cent in the prolific farm belt of central Florida, where the produce has a more watery, less concentrated flavor. On the other hand, because nature is reluctant to water the Chinos' crops, they must do it themselves, at daunting expense. This has led to endless irrigation experiments—flood irrigation has gradually given way to drip irrigation, and plastic mulches of various colors and opacities and thicknesses have been tried—that have kept the Chinos vigilant. That they are congenitally vigilant anyway is yet another lucky accident.

"How many people do you know who can look at the sky and pay attention that there's a storm coming?" said Hideo Chino, the seventh-born of the nine children. Hideo is a juvenile-court referee in San Diego, and he also lives there, but he continues to spend a great deal of time at the farm. (For this reason, he is regarded as being more of the farm than the first- and third-born sons, Jun and Shigeru, who are both surgeons living in Orange County, and than the only other daughter, Hazuki, a housewife, who has lived in Los Angeles for more than thirty years.)

"One of the worst things for strawberries near harvest is rain," Hideo continued. "We would always dread rain for the berries. But then, if it looked like rain, my mother would say, 'It'll be O.K. if it turns windy'—because that would dry the berries. I can remember seeing my father plow up a perfectly good field of cabbage because the price was too low. You're dealing with the facts of life."

From a handful of bamboo leaves Junzo could make a pond-worthy toy boat. From a reed he could make a whistle that looked like a bird. Playing a flutelike instrument called a *shakuhachi*, he could sound like a bird. He understood how to read animal tracks and human tracks. Looking at a footprint in an irrigation furrow, he could tell whether it had been left by a Mexican or a Japanese. On ground that he had made perfectly level he grew perfect celery. He talked to plants and received responses. It is said that he once walked from Peru to California. Words he used sparingly. When he did have something to say, one of his sons recalls, "he spoke in various decibels, in which the specific language was irrelevant."

Junzo was born in Hashiguii in 1894. The Chino family was well established there, and was relatively prosperous; his father had been the village mayor. According to Junzo's immigration card, he arrived in America in 1924, but in fact he came here several years earlier. An older brother had preceded him to California and had then fallen out of touch with the family in Japan; Junzo was dispatched to find him. Immigration restrictions prevented Junzo from entering the country, however, and he wound up in Peru. He spent two years working his way from there toward his original destination, by train in part but mostly on foot. In Oaxaca, Mexico, he learned that his brother was living near Long Beach. When he got hung up at the border outside Tijuana—at the time, he had gone ten days with no food—a Chinese family helped him out. Nearly starving in Baja left an indelible impression on Junzo. Over the years, in Del Mar, whenever illegal aliens showed up on the farm, even if Junzo didn't have work for them he made sure they got fed.

In the family legend, Junzo one day wandered into a supermarket in Los Angeles and by chance, in the produce section, encountered his prodigal brother. Perhaps so. For the next few years, he and his brother migrated from one agricultural oasis to another—Imperial Valley, Coachella Valley, San Joaquin Valley—picking melons, grapes, dates, almonds.

Meanwhile, in 1922, when Hatsuyo Noda was fourteen, her family transplanted itself from Wakayama, a hundred miles north of Hashiguii, to Oxnard, California, and her father began to farm celery there. The Nodas were familiar with the Chinos, and her marriage to Junzo, in 1930, was a semi-arranged matter. Of the two, Hatsuyo had the warmer and more outgoing nature. Friends of the children use adjectives like “supportive,” “loving,” “intelligent,” and “wise” to describe her. She made felt hats and shirts for Junzo, managed the family money, prepared the family meals, filled the house with flowers, and toiled in the greenhouse and the fields. When corn was in season, she waded into the stalks at sunrise and wielded her harvesting knife with terrifying celerity. She had a smile as sweet as early-summer strawberries.

Though Junzo had a gentle spirit, he also had a short fuse. Basically, he remained throughout his life a Meiji man—a product of the Chinese-influenced cultural, political, and technological modernization that flourished in Japan in the late nineteenth century. “Papa wanted everything done fast, and he wanted it done perfectly,” Kay has said. “We were told everything one time, and we were supposed to remember it.” The farm became a benevolent autocracy, and, in a manner that was typical of Meiji values, the life of the enterprise was coterminous with the life of the family—a self-sustaining universe.

Junzo and Hatsuyo’s first child, Jun, was born in the spring of 1930, and by that time they were operating a fruit stand in Los Angeles. Hazuki was born in 1932, Kay in 1933, Junji in 1937, Shigeru in 1938, Frank in 1941, Hideo in 1943, Fred in 1947, and Tom in 1949. The fruit stand lasted until 1934; it was abandoned because, as Hatsuyo later explained, “I didn’t like to count pennies.” They moved to a thirty-acre leased property near Venice, and for three years they produced vegetables for the wholesale market. Jun remembers running water, but kerosene lamps—no electricity. In 1937, they shifted down the coast to Carlsbad, bought a house and three acres of greenhouses, and raised vegetable seedlings and flowers. More than once, Junzo’s asters won prizes at the Philadelphia Flower Show, and that was not at all bad for business. It was less salutary for business when several farmers to whom Junzo had sold seedlings failed to pay their bills. Carlsbad was within commuting distance of Del Mar, and in 1940 Junzo leased land in the San Dieguito Valley and grew peppers there. This was the property that later became Chino Nojo.

For Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast, the Second World War altered every expectation. During the spring of 1942, the Chinos were assigned to an internment camp—Poston No. 3—near Parker, Arizona. Each member of the family was allowed to bring along a single suitcase. “We had to leave our cats and dogs,” Kay has said. “I remember the sound of the door being locked. I just couldn’t look.” Only the oldest of the children retain vivid memories of the internment camp: an arid square mile, blowing dust, a gun tower, barbed wire, lots of kids, craft groups, outdoor plays, Japanese movies, singing associations, sirens, suicides, Baptist preachers going on about Heaven and Hell. Hatsuyo had a job in the camp kitchen, and Junzo tilled a fifty-by-a-hundred-foot plot, a vegetable nursery.

Before entering the camp, they had signed over their Carlsbad property to a man named Jim Bailey, who was an employee of a produce shipper, and whom Junzo and Hatsuyo trusted. Putting the title in Bailey’s name was intended to be a dummy transaction, a way of protecting assets from possible confiscation by the government. Friends from Carlsbad, a Caucasian couple, made periodic visits to the Poston camp, and on one of their trips they brought the news that Bailey had sold everything—house, greenhouses, clothing, family pictures, dishes, toys, every valued memento. The Chinos were released from internment in the early fall of 1945. Each family member was given twenty-five dollars and a train ticket. Borrowing a friend’s 1936 Chrysler, they called on Bailey at his house, in Carlsbad. The children waited in the car while Junzo and Hatsuyo went inside, and when they returned Hatsuyo uttered the phrase “*Shikata-ga-nai*” (“You can’t do anything about it”). Not long afterward, Bailey died. Never again was this episode referred to either by Junzo or by Hatsuyo, except on one occasion many years later. “Jim Bailey was a weak man,” Junzo explained to Kay—and that ended the discussion permanently.

After a detour to Los Angeles, where they shared rooms in Japantown with relatives of Hatsuyo’s, the Chinos arrived in Del Mar for good during the winter of 1947. Junzo could not afford to buy land, so he worked out a sharecropping agreement with a landowner named A. M. Dunn. The property included a farmhouse and four other buildings. The day the Chinos moved in, they discovered that someone had painted racist epithets on the walls and, with a knife, had impaled a photograph of Prime Minister Tojo. They repainted the walls. Because the Second World War had never been Junzo’s war—the fanatical Japanese nationalism that triggered it amounted to a repudiation of Meiji Restoration values—he had no desire to prolong it. When a nearby military base announced a sale of surplus supplies, the Chinos bought what they needed to provide accommodations for their work crews: five Quonset huts, and blankets, metal cots, and kitchen utensils.

Dunn, the landlord, was a humorless man who the children thought “looked like a mean Santa Claus.” His family then controlled big chunks of the San Dieguito Valley—land that has long since been transformed from monoculture bean fields into golf courses, housing developments, polo clubs, and expensive strip shopping centers anchored by restaurants that specialize in multicolored frozen Margaritas. A friendly neighbor, Jennie Collins, who raises fruit and livestock on property a quarter of a mile from the Chinos, settled in the valley in the mid-fifties. “This was always black, black, black country,” Mrs. Collins told me. “There were no lights, very few other houses. At night, it was so quiet you could hear the train from Solana Beach, and that’s five miles away.”

A respectful understanding existed between Dunn and Junzo. Dunn recognized that Junzo was a gifted farmer, and he liked the fact that the rent always got paid on time. He also recognized that Junzo intended someday to own the land. Land very close by was available for three hundred dollars an acre, but Junzo felt that the soil was too sandy. In the summer of 1952, he agreed to pay Dunn a thousand dollars an acre for fifty-one acres, and two months later he paid five thousand dollars for five additional acres. The farm was a crowded place, with fifty-man crews at peak times. Where mechanical cultivation was unsuitable, mules were used. Bing Crosby owned a house about a mile away, and a mule of his named Toby, retired from a career in motion pictures, ended up pulling a plow on the Chino farm. At any given time, four or five issei, or Japanese immigrant, bachelors lived on the premises. Kay and Hazuki were not allowed outdoors after dark.

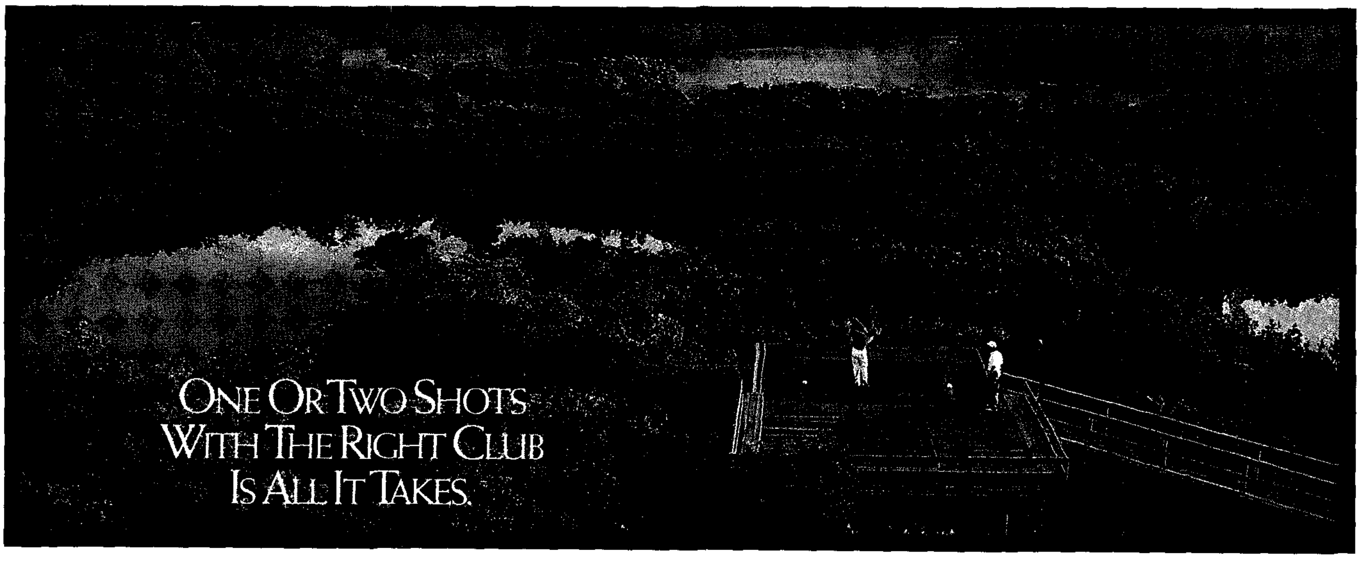
From the fifties through the late sixties, everything that wasn't grown for home consumption went to the wholesale market in Los Angeles. Junzo also planted unconventional crops like frisée, golden peppers, and Shanghai bok choy, but if the produce buyers for the supermarket chains deemed an item too exotic it could never leave the farm. Diversifying into larger volumes of mainstream products—cauliflower, broccoli, and celery in cool weather, and tomatoes, wax beans, and peppers in warm weather—failed to diminish the Chinos' dependence upon the wholesalers. Every day, they awoke at four-thirty and waited for the phone to ring before going out to pick.

The older children went off to school—Jun and Shigeru to Stanford, Hazuki to study textile design in Los Angeles, Kay to the University of Southern California—and returned in the summer to work in the fields or the packing sheds.

By the mid-sixties, Junzo was past seventy and had begun to contemplate retirement, whatever that might imply. Some years earlier, Kay, while she was a sophomore at U.S.C., had developed appendicitis and come to Del Mar to recuperate. Then, without explicitly declaring her intentions, she decided to stay. In retrospect, her return seems both fortuitous and foreordained, an expression of the family's collective unconscious. Shigeru and Jun were launched on their medical careers, and Hazuki had settled into motherhood and suburban life.

Over time, however, the others, one by one, came home. Frank, after attending junior college and studying geology at San Jose State, came back in 1965. I once asked him what, specifically, had drawn him home, and he replied, in the epigrammatic way that always makes conversation with him an interesting challenge, "Isn't that what home is for?" Hideo studied microbiology at San Diego State, finished his law degree in 1970, went into private practice for four years, gave up lawyering for a couple of years while he worked on the farm, then resumed his law practice by setting up an office in what is now a bunkhouse a tomato's throw from the Vegetable Shop. Fred attended a nearby junior college, was drafted into the Army, and ended up at a missile installation near Fairbanks, Alaska, where one of his tasks was to "tear apart nuclear warheads, put them in cans, and ship them to be rebuilt." He received his discharge in 1968 and, having spent eighteen months longing for the climate and the familiar comforts of Southern California, headed straight there. The only Chino who actually studied agriculture in college was Junji. At California Polytechnic State University, he majored in crop science and agronomy. But after he, too, came home, a rift developed between him and Junzo. He has spent the past twenty-five years as a mosquito-eradication supervisor for the San Diego County Department of Public Health.

At the University of California at Berkeley, Tom majored in anatomy and physiology and had plans to become a physician. In 1972, he enrolled in the medical school in Guadalajara, but he left after a week and returned to Del Mar, the



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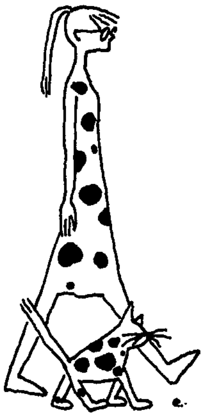
safest place to be while he contemplated his next move. The Chino Nojo corporate documents at that time listed him as manager, a title that had about it a meaningful vagueness. For several years, he held two jobs: one from dawn to midmorning, at the farm, followed by ten hours of cancer research in a lab at the Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation, in La Jolla. For a year in the late seventies, he moonlighted as a neurobiology researcher at the Salk Institute. At another point, he seriously considered entering a doctoral program in plant pathology. By the time he resolved to embrace the farm full time, the Vegetable Shop had evolved from a fanciful notion to an institution.

The Vegetable Shop opened for business in the summer of 1969. The first couple of years, it offered quantity and quality but not a great deal of variety—strawberries, corn, melons, tomatoes, peppers, celery, endive, carrots, daikon radishes. Melons and radishes the Chinos had always grown for themselves but never for the wholesale market. Most farmers who set up roadside stands are trying to unload their seconds or leftovers—whatever they haven't sold to the wholesale brokers. Shoppers, of course, are attracted by the prospect of buying fresher-than-supermarket produce at a bargain price. Whenever Frank felt uncertain about prices, he would canvass the produce at a nearby Safeway and mark up everything at the Vegetable Shop fifteen per cent. If the customers complained that they could pay less at the supermarket, Frank would nod and smile and agree: "Yes, we know that."



Within four years, the revenue from the Vegetable Shop approached that of the farm's wholesale operation. Even Junzo began to see that his children's whimsy was generating far more than pocket change, but his focus remained on the Chino imprimatur. When the impulse struck, Junzo would, like a general surveying his troops, turn up in the Vegetable Shop for a full-dress inspection. Anyone who had been lounging would stand at attention while he scrutinized and rearranged the merchandise. The cucumbers had to be lined up just so; the Brussels sprouts were supposed to be uniform in size and sit in their pint boxes heads up; the tomatoes couldn't look dusty or the beans rusty.

In 1974, Junzo had a heart attack, which he interpreted as a sign that he should relinquish certain prerogatives, such as driving the big Caterpillar. Implicit in each pragmatic decision were all of the deep and complicated feelings that Junzo and Hatsuyo had about the future stewardship of the farm.

"You can't really teach a person to drive a tractor," Frank says. "If you drive a tractor crooked, you have to know in your head that it's going crooked. It's like being a race-car driver: the car is an extension of your body—and how can you teach somebody to feel that?"

Hatsuyo suffered a heart attack in 1978, the year the Chinos sold their last brokered produce, and Kay started to assume Hatsuyo's responsibilities. Tom, meanwhile, had accepted the role of chief agriculturist, and as a result the farm's cropping strategies became increasingly complex. Junzo and Hatsuyo had fertilized with chicken manure, controlled weeds without herbicides, avoided disease-prone plants. Tom stuck to these basic tenets with a myriad elaborations. Previously, Junzo might have grown, say, four hundred two-hundred-foot rows of one variety of pepper. Now Tom planted only fifty rows but a hundred varieties. He began ordering seeds from Europe, setting up test plots, studying technical journals, experimenting with various cropping systems. The Chinos had never asked themselves the sorts of questions that concern most growers: How do I grow a tomato that can make it to Chicago? The question Tom and his sister and brothers were now asking was: How can we raise vegetables that will gratify the most subtle palate? They read *Gourmet*, *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appétit*, *Food Arts*, *Eating Well*, *Nation's Restaurant News*, and several gastronomic newsletters.

During the winter of 1990, Junzo, who was then ninety-five, developed a bad cold, which was followed by an intractable respiratory infection. When it no longer seemed possible to care for him on the farm, he was hospitalized, and over the next several months he was shuttled between the hospital and a nursing home. One consequence of his illness was that a long-anticipated project—tearing down the prewar buildings and replacing them with more stable ones—had to be postponed. To finance this project, Junzo had planned to use federal-government funds: a twenty-thousand-dollar reparation that was due each member of the family who had been interned during the war—everyone except Fred and Tom. Legislation authorizing the reparations was signed by Ronald Reagan in 1988, eight years after Congress first began holding hearings on "appropriate remedies" for the government's internment of its citizens. The bill that Reagan signed authorized total compensation of a billion two hundred million dollars. Junzo's and Hatsuyo's checks arrived in October of 1990, and a month later Junzo died. Hatsuyo had meanwhile developed major health problems—the strokes that severely impaired her speech, her mobility, and her ability to swallow. Junzo's twenty thousand dollars, as well as most of Hatsuyo's share, went to pay medical bills, and Junzo's capital-improvement master plan has yet to be put into action.

LATE one spring afternoon, Tom gave me a tour of some of the farm's hidden and semi-obscured charms. We started off in a red clapboard barn that sits next to Calzada del Bosque, the paved road that leads to the Vegetable Shop. Much of the barn's interior has been taken over by Maurice McColley, an eighty-four-year-old semiretired carpenter who has been a presence for about fifteen years. Previously, the barn was a storage place and machine shop for irrigation pumps. In addition to Mr. McColley's carpentry tools and supplies, it houses perhaps a hundred worn-out automobile tires, a mile of flexible irrigation pipe, dozens of louvered wooden window shutters, a tractor-driven planting tool that was used only one season, and a khaki-green 1965 Ford Mustang—the second-oldest edition of that model. When Tom showed me the Mustang, he said, "We don't get rid of cars that easily"—a profound understatement. A few minutes later, we walked from the barn toward a group of smaller equipment sheds, along the way surveying a dark-green Chevrolet truck from the fifties that appeared to be turning itself to compost, a well-preserved twenty-year-old avocado-yellow Karmann Ghia, a dull-gray 1965 Volvo, and four stolid, mature Volkswagen Beetles. "There used to be a VW craze here," Tom said. The Volkswagens signified visionary thinking rather than inertia. The hardest-working and strangest-looking vehicle on the farm was a mobile but asthmatic, bodiless 1959 Beetle. Stripped down to the chassis and retrofitted with a flatbed cargo area, it was used to transport workers and supplies to the field, vegetables from the field to the stand, and empty plastic crates from the stand back to the field.

Between the riverbank and the homestead, we passed an herb garden that had once been the site of a chicken coop, and wound up on a dusty path next to a melon field. Behind the main house were two trucks that seemed to be parked there terminally. The trucks occupied what was, in effect, the front yard of a prefab building that the Japanese trainees used as a kitchen. Through a screen door I could see three of the trainees taking a midafternoon tea break while watching a game show on TV.

Parallel to the riverbank were two greenhouses—Kay's domain. At this season, they were filled with flats of vegetables and melons. Year-round, they are the primary source of the Vegetable Shop's herbs. A grape arbor and a row of raspberry and blackberry bushes lined fifty yards of the riverbank. Where the berries ended, a row of rosemary plants began.

Tom had to get back to work, so I was free to wander. I started along the road past the melon field, which was on my right. Weeds were on my left, and strawberries were on my mind. A pair of rock doves crossed my path, and then a bevy of quail burst from the weeds. The fields are a wildlife refuge, populated by squirrels, rabbits, and gophers, and occasional roadrunners, coyotes, badgers, and bobcats. An ancient tortoise used to live in Junzo's celery field. When Frank and Fred disk a crop, red-tailed hawks gather overhead and amuse themselves and onlookers by dive-bombing for the field mice scrambling in the daylight.

Because I wasn't a farmer desperate for rain, the weather struck me as perfect: cloudless, with a faint breeze and a temperature in the mid-seventies. One of the trainees was furrow-irrigating a field of fennel, cabbage, and broccoli. He had opened several valves and was running along a turnrow, slamming a metal dam into the main irrigation ditch here, shovelling soil to close a furrow there. The furrows filled with such uniformity that opposing irrigation streams would inch along a crop row and meet almost precisely at midpoint. The earth here *was* flat: the Niña and the Pinta and the Santa María would have sailed right off the edge of Chino Nojo.

I came upon a field of beets, carrots, radishes, and onions. Next door were strawberries—two robust-looking varieties called oso grande and pajaro. A row of fava-bean plants—a combined windbreak and edible organic flypaper to protect the strawberries from a pest called the two-spotted mite—bordered the field. Earlier in the week, at Chez Panisse, I had eaten a salmon-salad appetizer garnished with Chino fava beans. I could see Tom two fields away, bent over, using a short-handled hoe to cultivate between rows of lettuce. The sun was lowering. The Chinos have an injunction against harvesting strawberries past noon, the idea being that a ripe strawberry picked after the sun has peaked will suffer too rapid a conversion from sugar into starch. Lacking such a sensitive palate, and also lacking a habit of self-denial, I decided I didn't care. The fava-bean plants were tall enough for camouflage. I had heard talk of a plan to install a video camera in the cornfield to monitor rustlers, but there were no signs of surveillance equipment hidden among the fava beans. I breached the border and felt safely out of view as I knelt above an oso-grande plant. I plucked three plum-size berries and checked my watch: 4 P.M. Forbidden fruit. The hawks and the quail were my only witnesses. Each strawberry tasted like a perfect slice of fresh-baked pie: firm, plump, juicy, sugary, and agreeably warm.

I wanted the Chinos to explain how I could have been eating and enjoying strawberries for forty years, while all along I hadn't a clue how a strawberry was supposed to taste. I knew, however, that no one on the farm would tell me. Kay can be quite talkative, and is especially gracious to visitors who introduce themselves as friends of friends, but when a dialogue crosses certain invisible lines her responses become elliptical and her memory becomes selective. Tom has mastered the allied arts of conveying a great deal by saying little and of saying a lot to avoid saying anything at all. Frank

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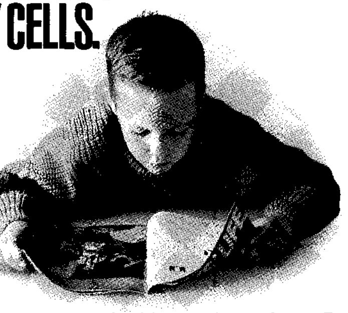

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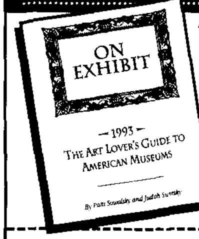

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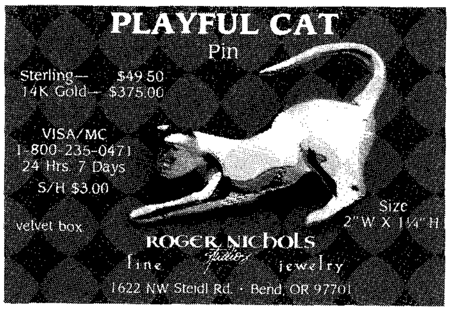

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seems most comfortable saying very little, period. The most garrulous Chino is Fred, so I once asked him point-blank what it was that made Chino vegetables and fruits taste special.

"We know that if it doesn't rain for twenty days we have to water our crops," he said. "You can't be stupid and be a farmer anymore. If you went to school and studied agriculture and then went out in the field to farm, you'd lose your shirt. You know why? Because all you have to do is make one mistake."

Conversations with Fred have a free-associational pitch and yaw. For about a week during one of my visits, a tomato bearing the label "Vine Ripened Extra Large Tomato Packed Exclusively for Big Bear Markets" sat on top of a jar of homemade peach marmalade on the kitchen table. It was like a piece of conceptual art that was daring someone to eat it. One day, I asked Fred what it was doing there, and this launched him into an object lesson on the differences between hothouse and outdoor tomatoes. From there he digressed to why honey is not good for you, the tendency of upper-class Japanese people to wear camellia oil in their hair, the fragrance of butyric acid and the impossibility of ridding oneself of the odor by any process other than metabolism, gene mapping and the possible fallacy of Darwinism, the size of the hole in the ozone layer, microwave technology, dead satellites, life expectancy, and the vagaries of the screen career of the actor Martin Landau. We were eating lunch at the time, and Hatsuyo lay on the sofa, mutely watching a videotape of "Double Suicide," an adaptation of a Japanese Bunraku play. Fred has no difficulty simultaneously following a movie and discussing whatever pops into his mind. There was a time when he rented a dozen movies a week. Recently, he has averaged about one a day.

After lunch, I followed him from the house to a large, high-ceilinged garage that during the wholesale-market era was the packing shed. It now contains a walk-in cooler and a slightly smaller cooler, a beige Ford van that Frank uses to make deliveries to the airport and to Spago, a silver Mercedes-Benz that was originally owned by Shigeru, an antique white Porsche that Jun gave to Frank, and a Corvette-like kit car that Fred ordered from a catalogue more than ten years ago and has never finished assembling. I asked Fred whether he thought the family had enough vehicles. "We're missing a truck that we could drive on the road," he said. Fred uses the Mercedes on his infrequent departures from the farm, mainly to chauffeur Kay, who has never learned to drive. He figures he puts only a few thousand miles a year on the odometer.

"I know what a hassle travel is," he said. "It seems sort of superfluous. What do you really gain from it? Wherever you go, you don't really know anyone. Going to Japan doesn't interest me. You're talking to someone who doesn't believe in experts. You live a life, and no matter what you do you have a limited perspective. The more you know, you realize how much less you know. If I travel, I'm not really going to learn that much more. I'm more interested in people and the mechanisms of people than in places."

In another area of the garage, Frank was installing a motor in a Volkswagen which would replace the one being retired from the field. As he adjusted a metal clamp on a transaxle boot, I asked him whether Junzo had understood the mechanics of automobiles. "No," Frank said. "A farmer does have to learn how to clean a carburetor, do a tune-up. But he just drove." The decapitated blue shell of the VW was parked outside.

"Originally, we were going to do it a little differently, but we just kept cutting it off," he said. "I had this idea in my head of what this car was supposed to look like, because I had this idea of what it was supposed to do."

"How did you learn about cars?" I asked.

"What do you mean?"

"Who taught you to do what you're doing right now?"

"Nobody. You just do it."

"How do you know how to just do it?"

"Well, these cars, you realize, were designed so that any moron could work on them."

Fred, in a welder's visor and a leather apron, was using a welding torch to frame a tall, heavy-duty storage rack—a steel structure that would be fitted with plywood shelves. Sparks flew several feet in every direction.

I asked Frank, "When a Chino learns welding, does he study it or does he just go buy welding equipment and start to do it?"

"No. Actually, it would have been a good idea for Fred to take some classes." Pause. "But he's pretty hardheaded."

Frank stood up to inspect his handiwork and to wipe his grease-covered hands with a terry-cloth towel. He had on smudge-free Levi's and a blue Oxford shirt with the cuffs rolled up in precise, even folds. If he had been wearing a white linen suit, he would have achieved the same fastidious result. After walking around the car, he picked up a socket wrench and went back to work.

"I'm sure a person like Wolf asks himself, 'Am I going to do this forever?' " he said of Wolfgang Puck.

"Do you ask yourself that question?"

"I don't ask myself that, no. Because farming is a lifetime thing. My impression is that my parents never thought any of the kids would do farming. I had a sense of that before the stand started. Once the stand started, it was something for us to do. The stand was the best thing that ever happened in our lives and theirs. If we just took care of restaurants, we wouldn't be where we are. We don't have to do this. If somebody down the street could do this better than we do, we'd stop doing it."

"What would you do if you weren't doing this?"

"I'd have to start thinking about what I was going to eat." For thirty seconds, he was silent. Then he said, "Maybe I'd be a gardener."

One summer day in 1978, Jean-Pierre Gorin showed up at the Vegetable Shop "in quest of the perfect green bean," as he later said in a eulogy at Junzo's funeral. Gorin, who is a French-born filmmaker and a longtime friend of Alice Waters, discovered not only the perfect green bean but also "purple-and-white eggplants, yellow, green, and red tomatoes, lettuces encompassing all shades of green—a perfect still-life."

While Tom was carrying sacks of vegetables to Gorin's car, he noticed a University of California at San Diego parking permit on the bumper. Was he a faculty member? Yes, Gorin said, he taught film in the Visual Arts Department. His body of work at that point consisted of two idiosyncratic documentaries, "Poto and Cabengo" and "Routine

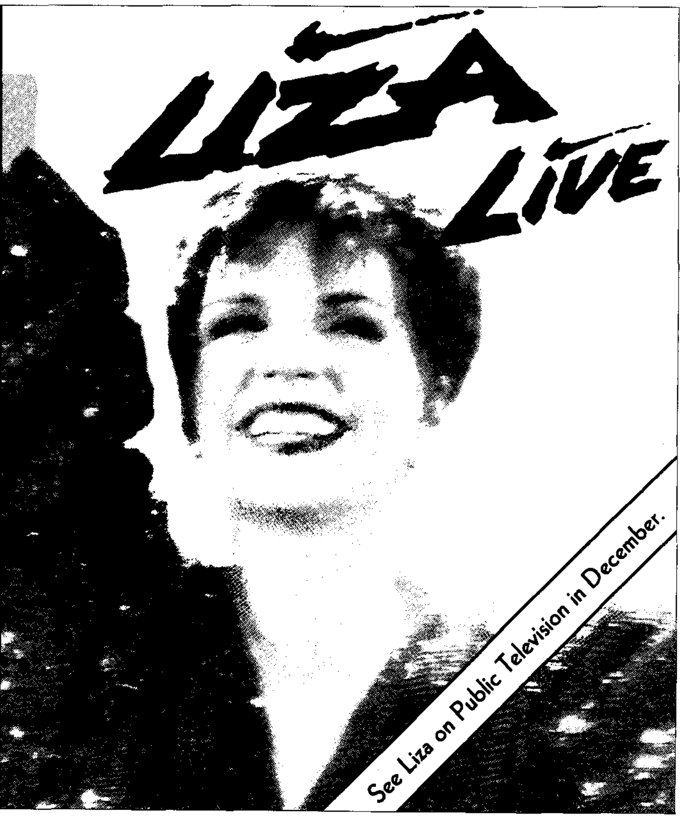
Pleasures." Tom dropped Jean-Luc Godard's name into the conversation. As it happened, Gorin and Godard had collaborated on several projects and were in the habit of referring to themselves as "the only two members of a Maoist film collective."

Gorin made a transition from steady customer to occasional employee. Once, Sophia Loren stopped by the Vegetable Shop. Frank, who is unapologetically celebrity-struck, did a double take, allowed for an interval of insouciant silence, then gestured toward Gorin, who was bagging corn, and said, "By the way, he's also involved in film." The more time Gorin spent with the Chinos, the more he felt that they and Waters should get acquainted. A year passed before Gorin arranged a meeting, but soon Greyhound coaches were ferrying shipments from Del Mar to the Chez Panisse kitchen, in Berkeley. The thought of his family's vegetables languishing several hours in a bus cargo bay made Frank uneasy—it took only a few hours for a cavaillon melon to go from sublime to sub-Chino-standard—so a switch was made to air freight. A couple of years later, Puck opened Spago, in West Hollywood. The day Waters came to the restaurant, whipped a lavender-and-white striped eggplant out of her handbag, and said, "Look what I've got!" was the day Puck decided that he, too, wanted to meet the Chinos.

The van that Frank drives to Spago every weekend is something of a shrine. Its interior walls are covered with autographs: Puck, Barbara Lazaroff (Puck's wife), several chefs who cook for Puck at Spago or his other restaurants, Waters and others from Chez Panisse (Paul Bertolli, Mary Jo Thoresen, Peggy Smith), Julia Child, Jacques Pépin, Richard Olney, Larry Forgione, Maida Heatter, Anne Rosenzweig, Bradley Ogden, and Mark Miller. There is also a wooden pizza spatula signed by Puck, Lazaroff, and the three-time Tour de France winner Greg LeMond.

One Sunday, I joined Frank for his run to Spago. The trip along the San Diego Freeway takes about two hours and bypasses Carlsbad, where he was born, where his parents once grew vegetable seedlings and hothouse flowers, and where most of the farms have long since become easy-commute housing developments. When we arrived at Spago, three hours ahead of the early dinner crowd, one of the head chefs was standing in the parking lot. Puck had recently leased a cherry-red Mustang for him. While the chef enumerated its surplus of desirable features, Frank nodded sagely. Several kitchen helpers were also hanging around, and soon Frank opened the cargo doors of the van. They lifted the lids of the cardboard cartons as if peeking at Christmas gifts—perhaps two dozen different fruits and vegetables. "Spago doesn't order anything specific," Frank told me. "I basically decide what they need—which is everything we've got. Has anybody ever criticized anything we sent them? No. Because we never send them anything bad. If it's bad, we won't send it."

There is a state prison in the town of Chino, California. Occasionally, a diner who notices the phrase "Chino Ranch vegetables" on the menu congratulates Puck for giving the inmates something worthwhile to do. Frank's time at Spago seems to be evenly divided between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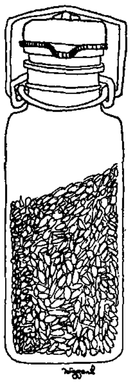
pizza-making and cultural-anthropology fieldwork. The restaurant has two kitchens: one of them is fully exposed to the clientele, and Frank stations himself there, in front of the pizza oven. He wears a white linen Spago apron and a cream-and-pink Spago baseball cap, makes vegetable-laden pizzas, schmoozes with the help, and watches the stars and the periodontists and herbalists to the stars pay dearly to amuse themselves. The agent Swifty Lazar invites a hundred and fifty friends to an annual Academy Awards-night party at Spago, and Frank is always on hand. Everyone back at the farm gets a full accounting.

Puck and his wife take short vacations to Rancho Santa Fe or Del Mar to be near the Chinos, though doing so exposes them to the family's relentless generosity. The Chinos bestow gifts—often lavish, famous-label objects—on birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and New Year's Day, and they give them at less predictable moments, with a frequency that leads many of their friends to arm themselves with reciprocal gifts before visiting the farm. "The farm doesn't expect anything other than courtesy," Hideo told me.

"Our parents taught us 'Be generous with what you have in abundance,' " Shigeru said. Obeying this dictum, Kay seems to be endlessly divesting herself of an abundance of Hermès scarves, Chanel handbags, Japanese wooden combs, and Baccarat tchotchkes. Once, I made the mistake of admiring aloud a collection of stout elliptical baskets woven from dyed Torrey-pine needles. They were the work of a local artist, and about a dozen of them, from goldfish-bowl to washtub dimensions, were stored in the office. As I was leaving, a couple of hours later, Kay handed me a small carton; it contained one of the baskets. In a conversation the next morning with Dwight Worden, the family's attorney, I asked what, short of returning it, he thought I should do. "Understand that the Chinos are very selective about who their friends are, but if you're their friend that's the way it is," he said. "You don't get into gift-giving contests with the Chinos. You can't win." A few days later, I mentioned to Tom that I still felt uncomfortable about the basket. Tom's response was to give me another gift—a book entitled "Japanese Etiquette: An Introduction."



Andy Goldsmith, one of the Chinos' seed suppliers, has described the Chinos as "a basic element of my life-support system." He added, "People bring or send them seeds from all over the world. Tom receives domestic-seed catalogues from Japan, publications from France and Holland and Israel. It's very easy to feel inadequate talking to him unless I really stay on top of my stuff. He's told me that what I do is very important in terms of having new products for him. He makes me feel that I'm integral to the success of his operation. As I visit vegetable-research stations, I come away with the idea that Tom should do this or that. The Chinos grow what they grow by some subjective method of natural selection. They try everything and decide what they like. I sell a million and a half dollars' worth of seeds a year, and for the amount of business I do with the Chinos I should be dropping in on them three or four times a year. But I see them every week. When I think of the amount of vegetables they give me in return for the amount of seed that I sell them, I would gladly give them all their seeds free. The Chinos feel that what they do is every bit as important and that they're every bit as professional as my doctor or lawyer. They have a clear sense of their own self-worth. The Chinos are not snobs. They're very warm, giving people."

When it comes to some of the Chinos' friends, their munificence backfires. Manny Farber says, "The reason I don't go out there more often is that they don't let you pay." Henry Knorr, a machinist who has been in business a mile from the farm since before the family owned it, gets a call a couple of times a year from Kay. She says, "We've got some corn for you. Come and get it." Otherwise, he gets his vegetables at Big Bear, where his money is good. Some people have attempted subterfuge, hiding money under a tray of vegetables, only to discover after their next visit that an envelope containing the same money has been slipped into their sack of squash. Tibor Safar, who has a doctorate in experimental psychology—which means that Tom can no longer accurately refer to him as "the most eternal grad student in the history of U.C.S.D."—used to help out behind the counter at the Vegetable Shop. He still comes around regularly, and never departs empty-handed. "It is a problem," he acknowledged. "I know that some people won't come here anymore because of that. But I've come to terms with this. I just told myself that staying away because the vegetables were free was too great a price to have to pay."

ONE morning late in June, the plywood unloading platform behind the Vegetable Shop was knee-deep in melons and dew-speckled corn. Tom shucked an ear of corn and handed it to me. It was the first time I had eaten raw sweet corn. I took a bite, then sat down to contemplate the paradox that corn could taste as complexly sugary as a Chino strawberry and somehow stop short of cloying. Though I didn't think Tom would have felt slighted if I had taken only a few bites, I polished off the whole ear. While he went to work on the melons with a cleaver and a knife—there were four varieties of Israeli muskmelon, six varieties of green-fleshed Japanese net melon, fourteen varieties of French cavaillon melon, eight varieties of Eastern market melon, half a dozen kinds of foreign and domestic watermelon—I shucked and ate a second ear, and then a third.

The cavaillon melons had gray-green skins and pink-orange flesh, the Israeli melons fine-netted blond skins and pale-yellow-green flesh. As I switched from corn to the melons, I wouldn't have minded a juicy lime, but it would have clouded my research. The melons all revealed perfumes and other subtleties that I had never encountered. Along the way, I kept losing track of which varieties I was tasting. Tom patiently repeated the same facts several times. I asked him what he told customers when they asked the names of melons. "We call this a French honeydew," he said, holding one at eye level. "It's actually an Israeli galia melon. We've always been paranoid about telling people the varieties of melons, because we don't want them buying the seeds themselves. Also, if you tell someone the name and they like the melon, they'll remember the name and never try anything else."

A couple of days later, I stood with Tom in a melon field at 6:30 A.M. He had already been awake for two and a half hours: he had commuted to the farm from his home in Encinitas, read the New York *Times*, and eaten a pancake breakfast prepared by Kay. Shortly before six, the Japanese trainees and the Mexican workers had assembled behind the Vegetable Shop. Tom gave them instructions for the morning, and they headed out to the fields in a convoy that consisted of the bodiless Volkswagen, two golf carts (one with a trailer full of stacks of empty plastic crates and flats), a hoodless Toyota pickup (also full of crates), and a four-wheeled motorcycle. Harvesting usually goes on until ten o'clock, unless there are strawberries, which can be picked until noon. At the moment, Tom, with the help of Rene Herrera, a small-boned, fine-featured man in his late twenties, who for four years has been migrating to Del Mar from Oaxaca, was looking for ripe melons. Tom had an opaque, skeptical expression, like a customs inspector. Rene carried a pair of long wooden sticks, which he was using to probe the foliage. The mature cavaillons were not much bigger than softballs. Tom judged their ripeness by the presence of a hairline crack at the junction of the stem and the fruit. He moved through the row at a steady, efficient pace, picking ripe melons and putting them in the furrows. When he got to the watermelons, he said, "A ripe watermelon should have a waxy coat and make a low-resonant response when you tap it. Also, the end that touches the ground turns yellow. When you tap an unripe one, it will make a more high-pitched, pinging noise." He held up a seedless red Japanese watermelon and said, "This has a high-pitched ping, but the color tells me it's ready. One determinant does not a watermelon make."

"Does a day make a big difference in flavor?" I asked.

"Eight hours makes a difference."

At 7 A.M., it was time to cut corn, and Tom and Rene rode in a golf cart toward the north end of the property. It was a ten-minute walk, but I knew they would be there awhile, so I took my time. I paused to watch Frank, who had put on a red apron and latex gloves to cut lettuce, then strolled past fields where radicchio, green beans, broccoli florets, Brussels sprouts, white cauliflower, green cauliflower, Romanesque cauliflower, turnips, carrots, and fennel were being harvested. In a freshly disked plot next to a row of sugar-snap peas, I saw a pile of more than a hundred melons, mainly cavaillons, a day overripe. Four months earlier, I

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had seen these melons in their embryonic phase. Tom and two trainees had sat with tweezers at a kitchen table, counting seeds from a large Mason jar. They were assembling sixty-three-seed lots and wrapping and tying them in cheesecloth bundles. After the seeds had soaked in water for two hours, they would be put in an incubator for a day, then planted in flats in the greenhouse. It struck me as excessively painstaking labor, and I was curious about the economics.

"Well, uh, these seeds are rather expensive," Tom said.

How expensive?

"Well, uh, about a dollar a seed."

"How many seeds to a pound?"

"About five thousand."

This was four thousand eight hundred and seventy dollars more than a California commercial melon farmer would typically pay for a pound of high-end cantaloupe seeds, I later learned. Staring now at the pile of dumped melons, I reminded myself: Tom Chino has a supple mind, and he knows what he is doing. I saw the golf cart parked in a turnrow, and I could hear the *whack* and *thwack* of knives dismembering cornstalks, but when I called out to Tom there was no response.

Tom and Rene were in there somewhere. I waded blindly through the orderly jungle for a couple of minutes and found them. Tom was working with frightening speed. Though a single stalk might produce three ears, the average marketable yield is one and a quarter ears per stalk. After severing the most mature ear, Tom would palpate the next largest, testing for worms. Every tenth ear, he cut off the top leaves to appraise the ear's maturity. The harvested ears were deposited in every third furrow. Corn pollen rained on his head, nestled in his ears. Though the pollen didn't bother him, he was allergic to the corn juice, and chances were that by the end of the day his eyes would be an itchy, bloodshot mess. His tool was a fourteen-inch chef's knife, which he sharpened daily. With it, he estimated, he had in the past ten years cut a million ears. Twice a season, it cut him.

When Tom returned from Berkeley, in the early seventies, corn had already become a major cash crop, along with strawberries. Hatsuyo oversaw the planting and cultivating and harvesting, and, though the public seemed to feel that the end result was sublime, her system contained imperfections. The basic problem was that demand often exceeded supply. Frank didn't mind when this happened, and he still doesn't—he thinks running out of things prevents anyone from taking the Vegetable Shop for granted—but it bothered Tom.

Tom carries a Rapidograph drafting pen and a leather-bound notebook in his shirt pocket. In a tiny scrawl, legible only to him, he records cropping and cultivating and harvest schedules, yields, and sales figures. Beginning last year, some of these jottings were transcribed to a computer database. In the hierarchy of variables that Tom must juggle when he's determining his annual planting strategy, corn ranks first. From one year to the next, all the other crops are rotated through all the other fields. Corn, however—the volume of acreage and the specific fields devoted to it—remains constant. The planting schedule is rigid, based on a growth cycle that, depending on the weather, ranges from seventy to a hundred and ten days. At any given time, about twenty-five acres are planted with corn. With double cropping in some fields, sixty per cent of the land is devoted to corn in the course of a year. The benefits of computerization notwithstanding, one variable has remained unquantifiable. "Studies always look at yield ratios," Tom said. "But what do the studies tell you about flavor?"

From corn, our conversation divagated to Japanese textiles, plant pathology, natural predators, Donald Trump's haircut, and New York City politics. His knife kept swinging and the corn kept coming. At one point, he asked Rene how many ears he had cut.

"All this time you've been talking to me, you've been *counting* to yourself?" I said.

"Somebody has to count them," he said, laughing. "*Jesus.*"

At nine-forty, while Tom was still in the field, picking peppers and eggplants, a dozen people were politely lined up in the shade of the Chinese umbrella tree next to the Vegetable Shop. Two women had brought folding chairs, two other women were reading Danielle Steel novels, someone else was busy with a word-puzzle book. One customer had travelled from Rancho Bernardo, a forty-mile round trip. A pretty, dark-haired woman from Rancho Santa Fe told me she had been coming to the stand several times a week for twenty years, and said the only family member she knew by name was Kay. I asked her how high prices would have to get to discourage her, and she replied, "I have no idea what anything costs."

The plywood shutters were raised at ten o'clock, and by eleven-thirty, when Tom was ready for lunch, the corn supply had dwindled severely, and the basil was all gone.

"It seems that there was some confusion about the basil harvest," Tom said.

"What was the confusion?" I asked.

"Well, they didn't pick enough."

"Is that the only thing you're out of?"

"That and patience."

Tom headed for the house, undecided whether to pick more corn. If he cut thirty or fifty dozen ears more, it would all sell. On the other hand, he was too hungry to go cut it himself, and the workers were entitled by law to a lunch break at noon. Strawberries were another possibility. Unless a worker could pick a twelve-quart flat in well under an hour, however, that option was uneconomical. By the time he had finished lunch, his mind was made up: no more strawberries today, and only fifteen dozen more ears of corn. As he got up to leave, Kay came in carrying a seedless red watermelon. Hatsuyo was seated on the sofa, awake but with her eyes closed. She wore a headset attached to a Sony portable tape player.

For more than thirty years, Junzo conducted a weekly ritual. Each Friday night, the trainees would gather at the kitchen table and listen attentively while Junzo delivered extemporaneous lectures on agriculture, ethics, philosophy, history, the foibles of contemporary Japanese society—whatever crossed his oracular mind. These sessions would last anywhere from an hour to four hours, depending upon the pedagogue's mood. If the trainees asked questions that he considered unworthy, he would refuse to answer. Two years earlier, a trainee named Aono Masaru had surreptitiously preserved these monologues by hiding a tiny tape recorder and microphone in his shirt pocket. I listened to some of the tapes, in which Junzo's voice had to compete with Masaru's heartbeat and breathing, the scuffling and barking of dogs, and the jangling of Kay's jade bracelets. It was one of these tapes that Hatsuyo was listening to now, and, looking at the tranquil expression on her face, I could see that none of the static interfered. Rather, the sound and cadence of her dead husband's voice seemed to affect her like a soothing mantra, a means of transport into both the past and the beyond.

As I was leaving the house, Kay began to slice the melon. I stood outside the screen door, tying my shoes and trying to defend myself against an excited Jack Russell terrier.

"Mama, I have a sweet watermelon," I heard her say. "Want a taste, Mama? Hey, wake up!"

HATSUYO CHINO died ten weeks later, on September 17th. As the children had done when their father died, they arranged a funeral service for Hatsuyo at a Buddhist temple in Vista, twenty-five miles from Del Mar. A priest from Los Angeles delivered a eulogy, which he began with a quotation from Kobo Daishi, the ninth-century founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism: "So as a saint one leaves their home town, so as a saint one returns." On the forty-ninth day after her death—as it happened, one day after the year's corn harvest was completed—a *nokotsu* ceremony was held, signifying that she had made the transition from *shiryo* (newly dead soul) to *nii-botoke*, or new Buddha. An urn containing half of Hatsuyo's cremated remains was interred in a *haka*, or family tomb, in San Diego. A week later—just a few days shy of the first anniversary of Junzo's passing—I was invited to go to Tokyo with Kay; Tom and his wife, Nina MacConnel, and their two-year-old son, Makoto; and Hideo and his fiancée, Sheridan Reed. When I met Kay in the airport departure lounge, she was carrying an amorphous package that was small enough to balance in the palm of one hand and was wrapped in a knotted Hermès yellow-white-and-black silk scarf. "Here's Mama," she said.

Several times during the next few days, I heard Kay address her mother's ashes as if she were speaking to a living, breathing being. In Tokyo, she perused a brochure that described the attractions of a lavish hotel where we would be staying in Osaka, and said, "Oh, the hotel has night spots. Did you hear that, Mama? Night spots." In Hashiguii, when someone showed up with a box of *imo-manju*, delicate yam-shaped pastries, she said, "Oh, let's give one to Mama. She loves *manju*." Only in the most limited sense, the corporeal, had Hatsuyo departed.

Hazuki Chino Ho, with her husband, Clarence, and their son, Steven, met us in Tokyo. We flew in darkness to Osaka, and spent the night. The next morning, we caught a train bound for Hashiguii by way of Wakayama, Hatsuyo's birthplace, where the family made ritual visits to the *haka* of several relatives. The ride from Osaka to Wakayama had revealed an anomalous landscape—pollution-spewing factories and ubiquitous vegetable plots. This contrast repeated itself along the route from Wakayama to Hashiguii until eventually the urban industrial sprawl thinned, giving way to greenhouses, harvested rice fields punctuated with conical heaps of straw, grape arbors, persimmon groves, pine and cedar and bamboo forests, glimpses of ocean. Dusk was approaching when we arrived.

From Hashiguii harbor, you can see the nearby island of Oshima, and a group of huge rocks that rose from the ocean floor. Kobo Daishi, legend says, built a bridge from Hashiguii to Oshima, using the rocks as foundation stones. The site is now a national park. Junzo and Hatsuyo's house, which had an off-white masonry exterior and an obliquely sloped green copper roof, was perched on a cliff above the park and was protected by a tsunami-proof thirty-foot seawall. A red Shinto gateway, like a stately piece of freestanding sculpture, had been erected on an outcropping below. From aeries on the rocks, cormorants studied the ocean—Hashiguii and its neighboring town, Kushimoto, enjoy a reputation for extraordinarily clean waters—and abruptly launched themselves and dived for fish. Seafood venders worked in tidal pools, washing squid, which they would later hang from drying racks in front of their shops.

I stayed in Hashiguii three days, during most of which Hatsuyo's sister-in-law and two of her nieces occupied the kitchen, orchestrating what seemed like a non-stop meal. A low table in the house's main room had been made into a butsudan, and a black-and-white photograph of Junzo and a color photograph of Hatsuyo, smiling, were propped there. Huge floral sprays and large plastic-wrapped baskets of fruit flanked the altar. Whenever a visitor entered the house, he would proceed directly to the butsudan, kneel, light incense, ring a brass bell with a wooden mallet, pray briefly, and bow. Several times a day, unprompted, the family members would do the same.

The funeral took place on an afternoon, at two o'clock. Shortly after seven that morning, when I wandered over to the house from a rented room where I was staying, I found that everyone had been awake for at least a couple of hours, as if it were a workday on the farm. Kay and Hazuki had been busy wrapping packages. "Well, the things that Mama wanted done today, I've done," Kay said. "She wanted to be in this room today, and she wanted these things wrapped." Months earlier, Hatsuyo had given Kay money and instructions to buy certain people gifts that they would use and never give away—Mont Blanc pens, Chanel handbags, crystal Baccarat monkeys, photographs of Junzo and Hatsuyo, *manju* and tea. In midmorning, Shigeru and Junji arrived. So did several former trainees—including some who had worked on the farm in 1953, the first year of the exchange program.

An hour before the service, I drove to the Buddhist temple with Tom. We left the village on a paved road but in less than a mile we were in a rural setting that seemed ages removed from the center of Hashiguii. The road ascended a ridge line and then wound down into a sparsely populated valley of rice fields and small gardens. Though the area was formally named Kujira Kawa (Whale River), after the nearest ocean inlet, it was commonly called the Chino Valley. Chino ancestors had controlled most of the land and, eight hundred years earlier, had built the temple we were heading for.

The sanctuary was no larger than a spacious living room. The altar was in the center. Dozens of *ihai*—thin blond wooden memorial tablets—were set on the altar. Photographs of local soldiers who died during the Second World War hung from teak beams. Glassed-in shelves containing dozens of brass and gold-leaf Buddhas and saints filled one wall. We set the photographs of Junzo and Hatsuyo on the altar, placed the flowers from the butsudan on bamboo tables, and rested the fruit baskets in front of the flowers. Cushions directly in front of the altar were reserved for the immediate family, and friends and other relatives were directed to positions left and right. Because Jun was absent, Junji was given the cushion designated for the eldest son.

A priest appeared—a slender hollow-cheeked man in his seventies, who, ten months earlier, had conducted the rites for Junzo. He was joined by another priest, who, it turned out, was his son. Kneeling and facing the altar, they began a chant accompanied by a percussive progression: alternately, they used a goatskin-covered drumstick to strike first a large bronze bowl, then a wooden drum, then a smaller bronze bowl. The chanting, which Tom later explained was "a rendition of a sutra and also the recitation of a person's life," lasted about fifteen minutes. Then the older priest took a pair of three-foot-high memorial slats called *sotoba*—oversized *ihai*—and held them horizontally to bathe them in smoke that rose from a block of incense on a brass tray. The tray also contained granular incense. Each member of the immediate family approached the altar, pinched a bit of incense three times, touched it to the forehead, and put it on top of the burning block. After the other mourners repeated this ritual, the older priest again sanctified the *sotoba* with incense smoke. An elderly cousin named Torao Chino, a career bureaucrat in the Japanese Diet, fulfilled the duty of chief mourner. At the conclusion of the service, he delivered a brief speech expressing the family's gratitude—remarks that he would later embellish, during a longer speech at a hotel in Hashiguii, where an uncountable-course meal would be served, along with crippling quantities of *sake* and beer. The mourners gathered briefly in front of the temple, where many photographs were taken, and then walked down a stone path in bright sunshine. Two farm women wearing bonnets were working with hoes in a nearby field.

At the cemetery, each mourner bowed before the *haka*, lit incense, dipped a myrtle branch in water three times and sprinkled the *haka*, then bowed again. The *haka* comprised seven pieces of granite, including an obelisk, one side of which was engraved with Japanese lettering painted white, another with lettering painted red. Hatsuyo's side of the obelisk had the red lettering. It had been in place since Junzo's death, and now that she was joining him the red would be scraped off and replaced with white lettering.

It was a springlike day in November. The cemetery was nestled in a narrow, steep-sided valley a quarter-mile from the main drag of Hashiguii. A pair of eagles glided above the ridge line. On a real spring day earlier that year, I had entered the courtyard of the farm in midafternoon, looking for Kay, and had seen only Hatsuyo, seated in her wheelchair beneath the bougainvillea—the first time I had ever seen her outside the house. She wore a windbreaker, an Hermès scarf, and a Spago baseball cap, and she was reading *Hokubei Mainichi*, a North American daily Japanese newspaper. The world's most businesslike Jack Russell terriers watched over her, a cool breeze was blowing, and the finches were chirping. She seemed the image of serenity, secure in the lap of a self-sufficient world to which she had given her life.

Early on the morning of the funeral, I had walked with Tom to the cemetery. After praying at the *haka*, he decided that he wanted to look inside. This required lifting three granite markers and a two-slab plinth. He removed the urn containing his father's ashes, studied it briefly, then replaced the plinth and the other stones.

I had been looking at the trees on the surrounding hills, and I asked Tom if he knew what kind they were.

"No, I'm sorry," he said. "I don't really know plants that well."

He lit another bundle of incense, bowed, and stood quietly. Then he said, "It's my feeling that you can never pray too much. There are some sects of Buddhism that believe that the more you pray the better chance you have of acquiring Buddhahood. But that's not really why I'm praying. It's more a matter of paying respect. I'm paying respect for what my parents did. What they did made me who I am." ♦

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CAPRI

I am a child who receives First Communion in Wilno
and afterward drinks cocoa carried around by zealous
Catholic ladies.

I am an old man who remembers that day in June:
the ecstasy of the sinless, white tablecloth and the sun
on vases filled with bouquets of peonies.

Qu'as tu fait, qu'as tu fait de ta vie?— voices call,
in various languages gathered in your wanderings
through two continents. What did you do with your life,
what did you do?

Slowly, cautiously, now when destiny is fulfilled
I enter the scenes of the bygone time,

Of my century, in which, and not any other,
I was ordered to be born, to work, and to leave a trace.

Those Catholic ladies existed, after all, and if I
returned there now, identical but with another consciousness,
I would look intensely at their faces, trying to prevent their
fading away.

Also, carriages and rumps of horses illuminated by
lightning or by the pulsating glow of distant artillery.

Chimneyless huts, smoke billowing on their roofs,
and wide sandy roads in pine forests.

Countries and cities which must remain without name,
for how can I explain why and how many times
they changed their banners and emblems?

Early we receive a call, yet it remains incomprehensible,
and only late do we discover how obedient we were.

The river rolls its waters, as it did long ago, past the church
of St. Jacob,
I am there together with my foolishness, which is
shameful, but had I been wiser it would not have helped.

Now I know foolishness is necessary in all our designs,
so that they are realized, awkwardly and incompletely.

And this river, together with heaps of garbage on its banks,
with the beginnings of pollution, flows through my youth,
a warning against the longing for ideal places on the earth.

Yet there, on that river, I experienced full happiness,
a ravishment beyond any thought or concern,
still lasting in my body.

Just like the happiness by the small river of my childhood,
in a park whose oaks and lindens were to be cut down
by the will of barbarous conquerors.

I bless you, rivers, I pronounce your names
in the way my mother pronounced them,
with respect yet tenderly.

Who will dare to say: I was called and that's the
reason Might protected me from bullets
ripping up the sand close by me or drawing patterns
on the wall
above my head?

From a casual arrest just for elucidating the case,
which ends with a journey in a cattle wagon
to a place from which the living do not return?

From obeying the order to register,
when only the disobedient would survive?

Yes, but what about them, has not every one of them
prayed to his God, begging: Save me!

And the sun was rising over the camps of torture
and even now with their eyes I see it rising.

I reach eighty, I fly from San Francisco to Frankfurt
and Rome, a passenger who once travelled three days
by horse carriage from Szetejnie to Wilno.

I fly Lufthansa, how nice that stewardess is,
all of them are so civilized that it would
be tactless to remember who they were.

On Capri a rejoicing and banqueting humanity
invites me to take part in the festivity
of incessant renewal.

Naked arms of women, a hand driving a bow across
the strings, among evening gowns, glares and flashes
open for me a moment of assent to the frivolity
of our species.

They do not need a belief in Heaven and Hell,
labyrinths of philosophy, mortification
of the flesh by fasting.

And yet they are afraid of a sign that the unavoidable
is close: a tumor in one's breast, blood in one's urine,
high blood pressure.

Then they know for certain that we all are called,
everyone meditates then on the extravagance
of having a separate fate.

Together with my epoch I go away,
prepared for a verdict that will count me
among its phantoms.

If I accomplished anything, it was only when I,
a pious boy, ran after the disguises of the lost Reality,

After the real presence of divinity in our flesh and blood
which are at the same time bread and wine,

Hearing the immense call of the Particular, despite
the earthly law that sentences memory to extinction.

—Czeslaw Milosz

(Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.)

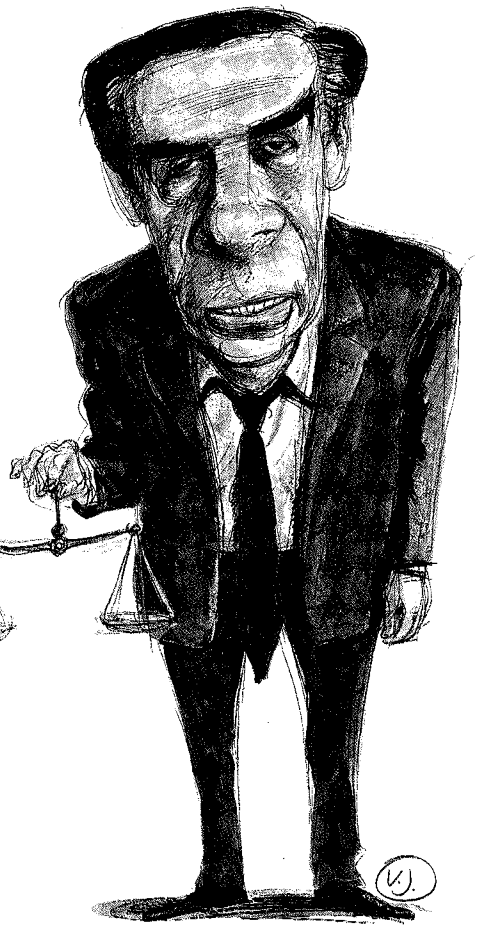
THE CRITICS

ON TELEVISION

PRIME-TIME JUSTICE

by James Wolcott

With the advent of Court TV, a twenty-four-hour cable channel devoted to current trials, courtroom dramas now have to compete with real-life transmission. In the traditional drama, the nineteenth century is still in session. The judges have the faces of old *Punch* cartoons. The robes, the rap of the gavel, the sworn oaths, the rhetorical pitch of the lawyers—each trial is a theatrical in which truth waits in the wings. The hourglass trickle of testimony builds to the moment when the star witness comes to the stand—only to be taken apart. In the late fifties, on "Perry Mason" the guilty party would break down every week and blubber like a baby under the relentless press of Raymond Burr's eyebrows. Even in black-and-white reruns, "Perry Mason," with its boxy suits and boxy sets (and bombshell troublemakers), retains its appeal by remaining a pure product of mind over mayhem. Its bulldog dedication hasn't dated. In the early sixties, "The Defenders" piped social awareness into the system. Over the years, lawyers have become TV's new clergy, hearing confessions, championing unpopular causes, righting wrongs, safeguarding the individual against society. All this, and money, too.



Jerry Orbach: "Law & Order" 's new stingray

NBC's "Law & Order," created by Dick Wolf, loads two shells into the chamber. Each episode begins with detectives, played by Chris Noth and Paul Sorvino, arriving on the crime scene, where chalk outlines seem to be doing a native dance on the sidewalk. The first half of the show is a police procedural, concluding with an arrest; the second half, the resulting trial. Prosecution strategy is formulated in the district attorney's office by Michael Moriarty, Richard Brooks, and Steven Hill, who horse-trade with the defense reps. Each prosecution is a small production presented to the jury. Lose the audience, lose the case.

One of the few series shot in New York, "Law & Order" absorbs the rumble of the streets while managing to keep the backgrounds soft, diffuse. It has a dreamy concentration. Its sharp casting of New York actors gives even small parts a jab. The scripts are complex but clear diagrams of sneaky subterfuge conducted by crackheads or C.E.O.s. With Paul Sorvino bidding *arrivederci* to the series to pursue a career as an opera singer, Noth's new partner will be played by Jerry Orbach. It's like hiring a stingray. With a voice like a car honk, he hunches forward on the screen as if he were the only man moving through congestion. Looking out for No. 1, his Lenny Briscoe is a detective saddled with two ex-wives who are hoping he'll catch a bullet so that they can collect the insurance money.

His first case, to be broadcast November 25th, involves a sidewalk slaying outside an Irish bar, which initially appears to be a crime of passion. Briscoe begs to differ. "Your Italians and Hispanics kill for love," he says. "Micks kill for money." As everyone in the station house shakes his head over this tasteless lapse, Briscoe's already plotting his next lunch. Funny, fast on the uptake, full of himself, he embodies the sunny side of cheap instincts. He has an almost chewy sense of corruption.

No matter how stark and streetwise a courtroom drama may be, it inevitably compresses and stylizes reality. It can't run the risk of boring the viewer rigid. After all, most real trials could make a mummy yawn. A friend of mine who produces documentaries for the BBC became an addict of Court TV while he was bedridden with the flu.

Which computes. Like the flu, Court TV feels fuzzy, stuck inside, and interminable. Conceived by Steven Brill, the editor of *American Lawyer*, Court TV is the cinéma vérité of due process. Where actors portraying lawyers stiffen their necks as if being fitted for halos, the real-life lawyers on Court TV plod through their notes, losing their place as their glasses slide down their noses. Onlookers slouch in their seats like the lost forgotten. At Court TV's slowest, the camera seems to be collecting lint. And yet the cases themselves often exert the dinosaur fascination of a Dreiser novel. Their very artlessness digs deeper into the social and psychological substrata of deadbeat America than the diamond drills of docudrama technique.

As evidence, consider the recent face-off between Court TV's two-hour special on the trial of Aileen Wuornos and CBS's docudrama "Overkill: The Aileen Wuornos Story." A prostitute who turned roadside tricks, Aileen Wuornos was arrested in 1991 as America's first female serial killer, accused of murdering seven men in Florida. Although she claimed self-defense, she had pumped enough shots into each man with her .22 to kill him extra dead. Afterward, she fenced the loot she had grabbed from the victim's vehicle, enabling police to retrace her whereabouts through pawnshop receipts. The key witness against her was her lesbian lover, Tyria Moore, an innocent Thelma to Wuornos' homicidal Louise. In the CBS movie, Jean Smart and Park Overall, who play Wuornos and Moore, never overtly express a lesbian attachment. They're simply deeply troubled roomies. (And where Moore was butch, Overall is folksinger femme.)

The biggest shortfall comes from trying to account for what made Wuornos empty those rounds. The docudrama inserts arty red-filtered flashbacks that depict the young Aileen being beaten and sexually mauled by men. The replays are so stagy and abstract that they seem like rock-video riffs rather than traumas branded on the psyche. Like so many actors in low-life roles, Smart can't resist being "vulnerable" even when it's the beer talking.

The Wuornos we watch on the witness stand on Court TV is a much scarier shag of hair. She's the last woman you'd want to see in your headlights. As the jury members file out of the courtroom after rendering their verdict of guilty, Wuornos glares at them, snarling "Scumbags of America!" as she pushes away her chair.

FROM "Perry Mason" to "Law & Order," TV courtroom dramas lean on the premise that most criminals have rational motives, reasonable objectives. At the bottom of the body count is a potential big score—a safe-deposit box, a blackmail drop. Such shows shape order out of increasing disorder. Reality is different. In the age of the thrill kill and the random stalker, material gain has been supplanted by momentary sensation, bracketed on both sides by anemic, anomic insensibility. Court TV is a peephole into a segment of America populated by moral and mental blanks. One night, I got hooked on the Massachusetts trial of a high-school weight lifter who had murdered his girlfriend, stabbing her so hard with a knife that the blade almost went through her. He was sixteen; she was fourteen, and had just had an abortion. He had boasted to friends that he was going to kill her, inviting them to tag along; one of his buddies helped dump her body in a pond. The lawyer for the accused tried to construct a steroid defense, arguing that at the time of the murder his client was on a loop-de-loop of what bodybuilders call 'roid rage—too pumped to hold back his hormones.

Between excerpts from the case, Court TV's commentators sketched an overview of the local scene. The trial had sparked an almost carnival atmosphere in town, with fellow-students of the two attending court for fun. Authorities were upset at how lightly teenagers were taking the case, including some groupies who became a fan club for the accused. Late as it was, I couldn't haul myself to sleep until I heard the verdict: Guilty. Even that outbreak of common sense seemed like a momentary stay. Watching Court TV, you sometimes feel as if the ground had shifted from under the country—that everything outside the courtroom has given way. ♦

SOCIAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Burlington* (*Iowa*) *Hawk Eye*]

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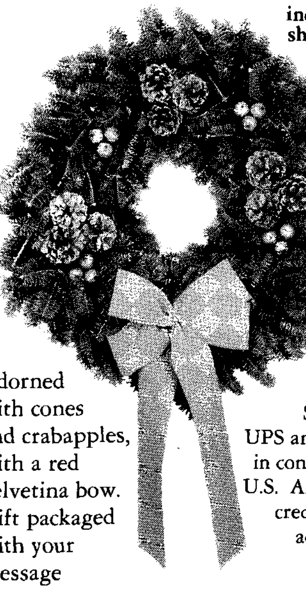

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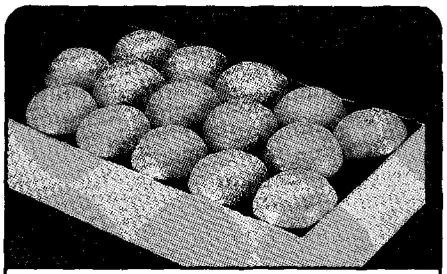

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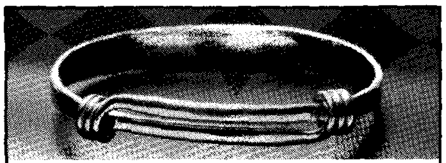

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

STILL LIFE

by Terrence Rafferty

THE most conspicuous achievement of Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" is its very existence—or, rather, its existence in the form of a three-hour-and-twenty-minute epic biography distributed and (largely) financed by a major Hollywood studio. Malcolm's story is not, on the face of it, the likeliest material for prestige-picture treatment. The hero is a smart, fiercely independent-minded ghetto black who spends his youth as a drug addict and a petty crook and his adulthood as a tireless proselytizer for resistance to the inherent racism of white America. His message is bitter, defiant, and unconciliatory, and it offers no comfort either to "well-meaning" white liberals or to black advocates of Martin Luther King, Jr.,'s integrationist philosophy. King's patient, nonviolent approach was to some extent a reflection of his Southern Christian background; Malcolm's world view is the product of the stern discipline of Islam, to which he was converted during a prison stretch. "The Autobiography of Malcolm X"—an as-told-to book, written by Alex Haley and published in 1965, not long after its subject's death—is formally an inspirational narrative, like the "Confessions" of St. Augustine, but the hero's spiritual triumph is couched in terms that are utterly alien to mainstream American society. He begins as an unscrupulous predator, becomes a studious ascetic, and fulfills himself as a scourge. Finding your way through what James Baldwin called "the great jungle of Malcolm's book" is a heady experience for any reader, white or black, because the narrator's voice—insistent, relentless, confoundingly forceful—keeps challenging you to refute its brazen assertions. Much of the autobiography was written after Malcolm broke with the Nation of Islam and its founder, Elijah Muhammad, whom he had revered. By all accounts, it was a period of intense spiritual confusion for him, and that not fully acknowledged uncertainty may be the source of the book's most mysterious, paradoxical quality—the way Malcolm's rhetoric, which is apparently so dogmatic, seems to open readers' minds to the possibility of unique, entirely personal truths. The Malcolm of the autobiography is an extraordinary literary creation—a strong, boldly drawn character whose meaning is fluid, ungraspable, fathomless.

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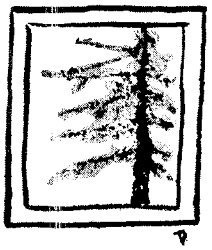
There probably isn't a filmmaker alive who could do justice to the provocative complexities of Malcolm X's personality. What's disappointing about Lee's "Malcolm X" is that, for all the dedication and care he has lavished on it, the movie remains stubbornly impersonal. We can see that Lee loves Malcolm, even idolizes him, but the picture doesn't give readers of the autobiography anything like a fresh vision of its remarkable subject. Lee follows the contours of Malcolm's life story faithfully, hitting the high points of the book, and those viewers who know nothing about Malcolm, or who know him only by his formidable reputation as a black-pride firebrand, might find everything in the film fascinating, revelatory. "Malcolm X" is probably *intended* for people who don't really know as much as they should about the subject—for young urban blacks who have heard the name on rap records and have worn the cap but haven't read the autobiography. The picture has a sort of high-school field-trip quality, an explicitly educational tone. (The last scene takes place in a classroom in present-day Soweto; several children stand up, in succession, and announce "I'm Malcolm X," and then their teacher, Nelson Mandela, reads a passage from one of Malcolm's most famous speeches.) There's a great deal of passion in "Malcolm X," but it's not an artist's passion; the responses Lee aims for are the clear, pedagogically effective ones rather than the disturbing, irresolvable ones that Malcolm's own account evokes on virtually every page. I wouldn't presume to guess what effect the movie may have on inner-city kids. To me Lee's approach feels static and reductive, more functional than inspired. "Malcolm X" is as stately and as reverent as "Gandhi."

Lee assumes Malcolm's greatness and then simply illustrates it, with a series of lovingly detailed tableaux from the autobiography. He doesn't solve the fundamental problem of this life story, which is that the pilgrim's progress of the hero is a spiritual and intellectual journey. After Malcolm's wild youth, his private life consists of quiet, solitary self-education and watchful adherence to his religion's austere tenets; and his public action is almost exclusively verbal—he gives speeches and appears on talk shows. Malcolm X was a militant orator, but he wasn't, in the practical sense, an activist; unlike Gandhi (and King), he didn't accomplish anything concrete. (Elijah Muhammad, it should be noted, forbade political involvement by the Nation of Islam, so Malcolm didn't have much choice.) In movie terms, this life isn't very dramatic. It would take a more radical artist than Spike Lee to give shape and visual force to Malcolm's internal conflicts; the ponderous rhythms of the great-man bio-pic only emphasize the impossibility of rendering this story with conventional movie-narrative means.

More than twenty years ago, James Baldwin took a crack at imagining Malcolm for the big screen. His script (which is in print, under the title "One Day, When I Was Lost") is a densely textured, impressionistic portrait of a mercurial personality, and although it's classically unfilmable, it plays beautifully in the reader's mind: it *interprets* Malcolm—passes the facts of his life through the critical consciousness of a sympathetic, penetrating artist. The screenplay of "Malcolm X," credited to Lee and Arnold Perl (who reworked Baldwin's original in the early seventies), uses scenes and some structural ideas from the Baldwin scenario, but in a haphazard way. Lee's choices are often strange—sometimes totally inexplicable. In the dissipated-youth passages, which account for the first hour or so of the film, we see Malcolm (Denzel Washington) swaggering through the streets, night clubs, bars, and hotels of Roxbury and Harlem, his life of crime moving to the infectious beat of jump blues, boogie-woogie, and swing-era big-band jazz. (The source music—Lionel Hampton, Basie, Ellington, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Big Joe Turner, Louis Jordan—is a marvellous sampler of black music of the forties.) We do not, however, see him—as Malcolm eventually saw himself—as a depraved parasite, feeding unscrupulously on both the pathetic illusions of his black brothers and sisters and the perverse desires of whites. Lee's Malcolm does a little numbers running, snorts cocaine once, and participates in an antically staged burglary. The autobiography and Baldwin's script show him selling dope, steering rich white men to whip-wielding black whores, and becoming crazed and violent from constant coke use. It's wise of Lee to modify the hellfire moralism that the autobiography imposes on Malcolm's early life as a ghetto hustler; the movie conveys some of the beauty and joyful vitality of that era's urban black culture, the sense of community that provided relief (if not salvation) from the daily grind of oppression. This period of Malcolm's life, full of flamboyant characters and pungent gangster atmosphere, is, after all, the most movie-friendly material in the whole story; if you don't make this stuff vivid and exciting, your picture is in serious trouble. But the soft-pedalling of the hero's criminal activities undermines the dramatic (and emotional) coherence of his jailhouse conversion to the rigorous philosophy of Islam. Without evidence of true degradation, Malcolm's abrupt and total moral about-face feels even more like an overreaction than it should: he seems to be punishing himself for having had too good a time.



Malcolm was temperamentally an extremist—in each of his contradictory incarnations, he went all the way—but every radical swerve he made had some strong justification. His life was a dialectic, not a linear argument, and the conversion sequences in "Malcolm X" are the movie's worst failure, because Lee doesn't dramatize coherently the back-

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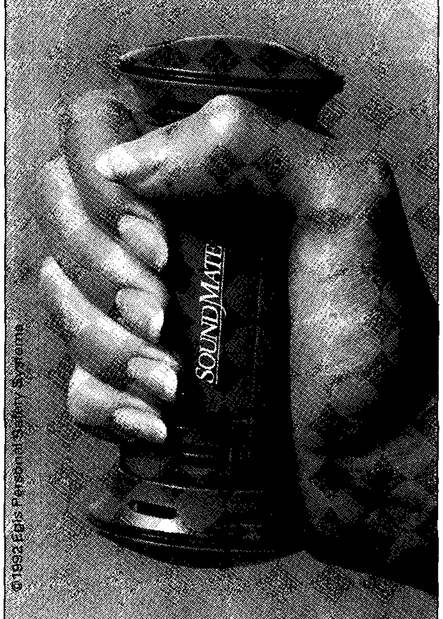

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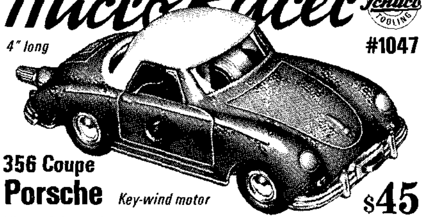

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and-forth movement of his hero's consciousness: he springs the antithesis on us without ever having established the thesis. It's difficult not to feel that the movie is just marking time in these passages, holding on until Malcolm is released from prison and into his public life. When the merely human Malcolm bursts forth as the mythic Malcolm X, the famous preacher who inspires his people and scares the wits out of the white "devil" that keeps them down, Washington's performance takes a huge leap forward in power and authority. (His work in the early scenes is inventive but spotty: no actor in his mid-thirties should be required to play a teen-ager.) And Al Freeman, Jr., enlivens the picture periodically with a wonderfully sly turn as the gnomelike, enigmatic Elijah Muhammad. But everything else about the movie, in this final and supposedly climactic phase, feels inert. There's something about achieved celebrity that tends to stall a story's narrative momentum. And that's especially true in this case, because of the nature of Malcolm's celebrity: he was famous for what he said (or, more broadly, for what he represented), rather than for what he did. We gaze at the larger-than-life figure; we listen to his oratory; nothing, save for the internal squabbling of the Nation of Islam leadership, is actually happening.

Lee may not realize just how boring public figures—even figures as charismatic as Malcolm—really are: they're fixed, objects of contemplation. Malcolm himself, in the baffled final months of his life, complained to Alex Haley that he was trapped by people's perceptions of him—immobilized in his image, and unable to "turn the corner." Lee—whose aesthetic philosophy, shared with Oliver Stone, might be expressed as *Koppelo ergo sum* ("I appear on 'Nightline,' therefore I am")—probably hasn't reached that frightening point himself. Or maybe the filmmaker has simply been undone by a worshipful attitude toward his subject. At times, it feels as if all the movie wanted to do were to create a recognizable image of Malcolm X, a statue for us to look up at in wonder. Oddly, there's more of the spirit of Malcolm X in Terence Blanchard's soundtrack music than there is in the often spectacular sights Lee has put on the screen. The music weaves in and out of a couple of hauntingly lovely themes, constantly reorchestrating them or working subtle jazz variations on them, so that every time we hear them they sound different and seem to mean something different. This music understands that the X in Malcolm X—the symbol with which Malcolm cancelled out his slave name, Little—is also, poetically, the lowercase *x* of mathematical symbolism: the variable, the unknown value you have to search for. Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" gives you the answer right away and thus deprives you of the deepest meaning of Malcolm's adventure: the pleasure and satisfaction of thinking the problem through in your own way, in your own time.

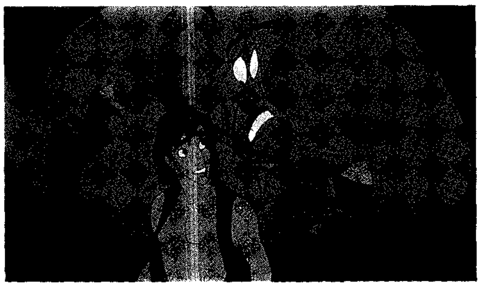
CUNNINGLY, Francis Ford Coppola calls his new vampire movie "Bram Stoker's Dracula"—an ingenious attempt to duck responsibility for what must be the most aggressively silly version of this famous story ever committed to film. He can't put it off on poor Stoker—even though the screenplay, by James V. Hart (co-author of "Hook"), follows the novel's chronology pretty closely. What makes the picture so peerlessly ridiculous is the style, not the story. Hart and Coppola are truly a terrible match: the screenplay (like that of "Hook") embellishes a simple, classic tale with killer-diller thrills and special-effects opportunities; and Coppola executes every dreadful idea with ferocious, near-fanatical enthusiasm. "B.S.'s Dracula" is an orgy of fake blood, opera-house décor, and delirious film-lab wizardry, and it sustains a hysterical tone for an ungodly two hours and ten minutes. The movie isn't very scary (except, perhaps, as an example of what Hollywood executives will give people tremendous amounts of money to do). And it isn't romantic, and that's really disastrous, because the picture is conceived as a vampire saga in the modern, eroticized manner—horror to make women swoon like Victorian maidens. Few women in the audience, I'd guess, will black out with longing for Gary Oldman's Dracula. When he appears in the guise of a dashing young Transylvanian nobleman, he's perfectly opaque and remote; Oldman has many gifts, but sex appeal has never been among them. (He's much better as the old Dracula, leering wrinkledly beneath a crullerlike coiffure; in this incarnation, he's free to sink his fangs into the scenery and have some fun.) Winona

Ryder, as the proper young lady he seduces, feigns interest gamely. And Anthony Hopkins, playing the vampire-hunter Van Helsing, mugs and bellows with the bracing indifference to verisimilitude of an old Shakespearean ham. But the occasional felicities of the acting aren't nearly enough to save the movie. This "Dracula" just keeps coming at us indefatigably, unstoppably, as if it were pursuing us through eternity, and it leaves us feeling mysteriously drained. This is no ordinary movie: it has the appalling persistence of the undead. ♦

FREE SPIRITS

by Michael Sragow

HAREM-PANTS romance meets baggy-pants farce in "Aladdin," the Disney cartoon team's spiffy, inventive, and hilarious retelling of the tale from "The Thousand and One Nights." As Aladdin goes from gutter rat to royal poseur to bona-fide hero, the film itself manages to be several things as it moves along: exotic adventure, musical comedy, and out-and-out burlesque. Of course, it's also a parable about the surprise and wonder of personal transformation. But what makes this animated feature such intense, giddy fun is the eruption of uninhibited parody that Robin Williams provides as the voice of the Genie in Aladdin's lamp. Williams has been giving terrific movie performances for a dozen years, but no other role has showcased his standup genius as well as this wildly expansive spirit does. Some feel that "Good Morning, Vietnam" did, but in that liberal comedy-drama Williams' disk-jockey routines were oddly forced—a problem that can also afflict his live appearances. Williams banks on conjuring an illusion of spontaneity, so when his inspiration flags and he falls back on familiar material the current of energy connecting him to his fans breaks into a staticky mess and his manic frenzy becomes discomfiting. Luckily, the Genie in "Aladdin" offers audiences a unique conduit into the free-associational maelstrom at the center of Williams' improvisatory talent. Williams turns the Genie into a quick-change artist and mimic: to express his darting thoughts, he does lightning impersonations of everyone from William F. Buckley, Jr., to Arsenio Hall. The moviemakers run with Williams' breakaway creativity. The Genie mutates into dozens of variations on himself. Williams' spieling and spritzing acquires a lickety-split clarity. It also gleefully explodes the dimensions of the fable.



As the voice of the Genie in "Aladdin," Robin Williams introduces Disney to the untamed adolescent id.

In this version, Aladdin isn't the good-for-nothing son of a widowed mother but a restless street urchin—according to prophecy, he's the Diamond in the Rough destined to enter the Cave of Wonders and take possession of the enchanted lamp. In fact, the directors, John Musker and Ron Clements, who collaborated on the screenplay with Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio, drop the character of the mother altogether; they streamline the traditional Aladdin story into a contest between the boy and a towering vizier-wizard named Jafar, Aladdin's rival for the hand of the Sultan's daughter, Princess Jasmine. (She's headstrong and independent, but still a supporting character—a possible disappointment to devotees of "The Little Mermaid" and "Beauty and the Beast.") The changes make the film both sturdy and contemporary enough to support a wisecracking rendition of the fairy tale, an affectionate sendup of the campy Arabian Nights of Hollywood (from Ali Baba and Sinbad movies to "Kismet"), and a full-fledged homage to the great 1940 "Thief of Baghdad," which, like "Aladdin," featured a toy-loving Sultan.

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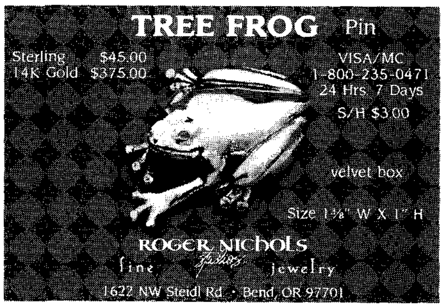

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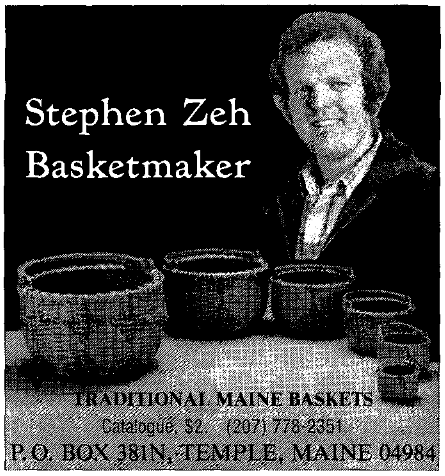
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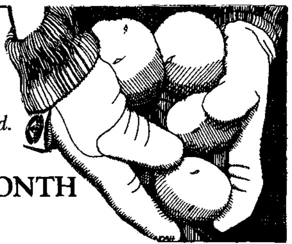
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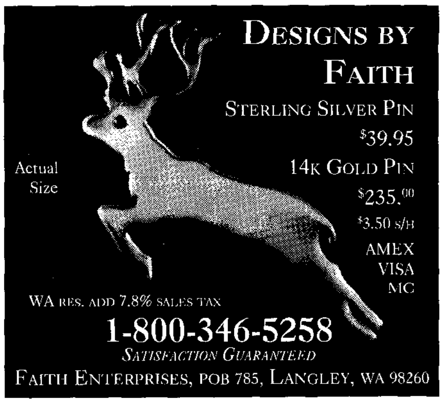
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about feeling trapped in the palace, or the Genie complains about feeling trapped in the lamp, the explicit message—as Jasmine puts it, the awfulness of never being free to make your own choices—comes through *too* loud and clear. And when Aladdin proves himself to be the fated Diamond in the Rough the film, for all its rascality, can seem as easy to read as an Army commercial urging viewers to "be all that you can be." But when Williams' Genie soars into orgiastic excesses of play, with the animators gamely keeping up, the message becomes the much more free-form and congenial "be anyone you want to be." The artists give the Genie a suitably protean shape—improbably top-heavy, with a bulging torso trailing down into wisps—and a malleable mug, frankly influenced by the curling line of Al Hirschfeld's caricatures. The combination of oversized, eclectic drawings and Williams' ebullience imbues the film with a febrile emotional ambience—a sort of extroverted narcissism. The characters act out all their impulses. In "Aladdin," Williams introduces Disney to the untamed adolescent id.

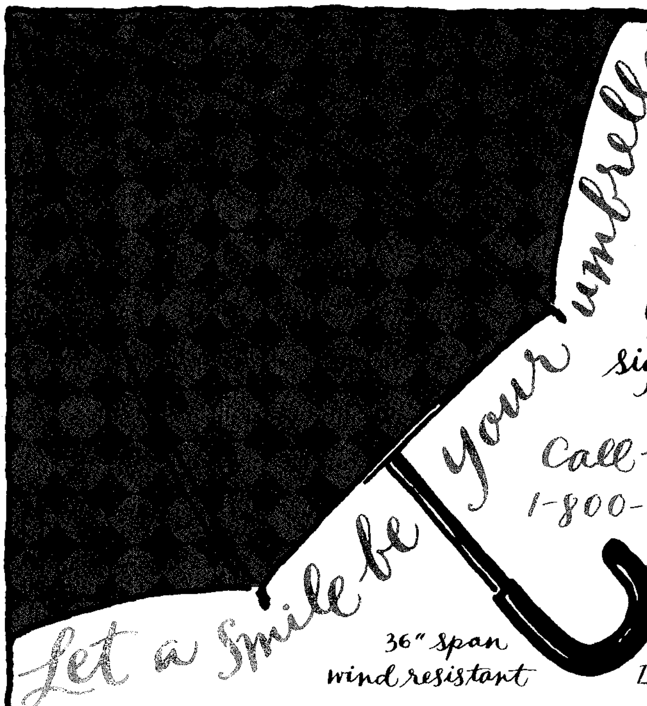
The spirit of youthful anarchy reigns even when the Genie is offscreen: Aladdin and his monkey buddy, Abu, are always tearing things up and poking into forbidden places. The straight action scenes and set pieces have speed and thump and, at times, an almost voluptuous excitement. The entrance to the Cave of Wonders—a tiger's head with a jaw as wide as a hippo's—has the open-ended magic of a vintage-storybook rendering. The Disney team sprinkles spunky bits of comedy into the sappiest moments: when Aladdin takes Jasmine on a magic-carpet ride to see the wonders of the world, they startle an Egyptian worker, who accidentally knocks the tip of the nose off the Sphinx. The characters are boldly drawn and vocalized; the bland Disney hero and heroine are swarthier than usual, and they're handed animal sidekicks who express themselves more directly than their masters. Aladdin has his scrappy, Donald Duck-voiced monkey, and Jasmine a protective tiger named Rajah, who takes a bite out of the seat of an unwanted suitor. The villain Jafar (Jonathan Freeman) is the most successful human character: he speaks in unctuous threats, and a purplish shadow spreads over his entire face. Jafar also has the perkiest animal pal, a toothy parrot named Iago. This tough bird is a small triumph for the comedian Gilbert Gottfried, whose specialties—wheedling, whining, and strangled rage—are a lot easier to take when you don't have to look at his stiff physical shtick and squinty-eyed expressions. And with the magic carpet the Disney animators once more display their wit and expertise at enlivening inanimate objects (as they did with the teapot, the wardrobe, the clock, and the candlestick in "Beauty and the Beast"). At one point, when the carpet feels rejected by Abu, it droops in a manner that recalls Steve Martin doing a depressed wild-and-crazy guy.

Doubters are sure to carp at the continuation of a post-"Little Mermaid" Disney formula that blends high-flown, vaguely New Age messages with Broadway glitz, including the obligatory production number where the first-act curtain would be. Actually, though, in "Aladdin" the filmmakers spoof that formula even as they fulfill it spectacularly. (In a touch worthy of Warner Bros. cartoons or Jay Ward's "Fractured Fairy Tales," the Genie flashes an applause sign after he's already brought down the house.) The movie combines a pop crazy quilt of Eastern folklore with Yiddish-inflected comedy. Alan Menken's score isn't memorably melodic, but it has zest and push, and at their best the lyrics, by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman, have a sportive edge. At the height of his campaign to defeat Aladdin, the powerful, entrenched Jafar sings, "Read my lips and come to grips with reality. . . . His personality flaws give me adequate cause to send him packing." "Aladdin" dares to be *that* up-to-the-minute—and, whether through a series of fortuitous strokes or mighty shrewd calculations, comes out right on target, like a vision in some funky crystal ball.

FOR a real example of the tyranny of formula, look no farther than "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York." The director, Chris Columbus, and the producer-writer, John Hughes, use the first "Home Alone" movie—the third-highest-grossing film in history—as a template. Leaning hard on the sensitive-brat charm of the eleven-year-old star, Macaulay Culkin, they duplicate and exaggerate every laugh-getting, tearjerking separation and reunion, every crowd-pleasing gibe and gambit. It's as if they were counting on being able to win back the same huge audience merely through the power of recognition—a strategy that may backfire in this age of home-video saturation. Families who have just watched the original for the third or fourth time may not be overjoyed when they realize that they've shelled out recession bucks to see what amounts to a big-screen repeat.

Columbus's script for Joe Dante's 1984 horror comedy, "Gremlins," may have prompted Hughes to hire him to make "Home Alone," since Culkin's character, Kevin McCallister, is like the cuddly good gremlin and the spiky bad gremlin rolled into one. Indeed, the first movie was at its liveliest when Kevin got to be good by being bad—relying on his vicious childish ingenuity to defend the family homestead against the bumbling burglars played by Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern. For one sequence, the movie became a cat-and-mouse cartoon and a lampoon of home-invasion thrillers. But this isle of slapstick relief floated in a pool of Yuletide mush, revolving around the mutually enlightening friendship between Kevin and a deceptively menacing next-door neighbor (Roberts Blossom) and Kevin's reconciliation with the family that had unwittingly abandoned him (led by Catherine O'Hara as his mom).

In the new movie, everything is the same, but bigger—including the main setting, which switches from the Chicago suburbs to Manhattan. (Kevin mistakenly boards a plane to Gotham while his folks fly off to Miami for their Christmas vacation.) Kevin gets another forbidding adult to befriend—Brenda Fricker as a homeless woman who devotes herself to pigeons (a bow to the "Feed the Birds" number in "Mary Poppins"). Pesci and Stern resurface, and the climax—once again—is their attempt to invade a house that Kevin has cunningly booby-trapped. The filmmakers pump up the volume on the schmalz and the sadism, hoping to attain a hyperbolic balance. What they achieve is double overkill. Culkin is used as if he were a literal "Gremlins" gremlin: he replicates his effects like an animatronic doll. He screams, he pouts, he proclaims "Yes!" Either you're captivated or you want to muzzle him. Is it funny to see him climb to the rooftop of a brownstone and land four bricks smack on the forehead of Daniel Stern? To borrow Kevin's beloved line, "I don't think so." ♦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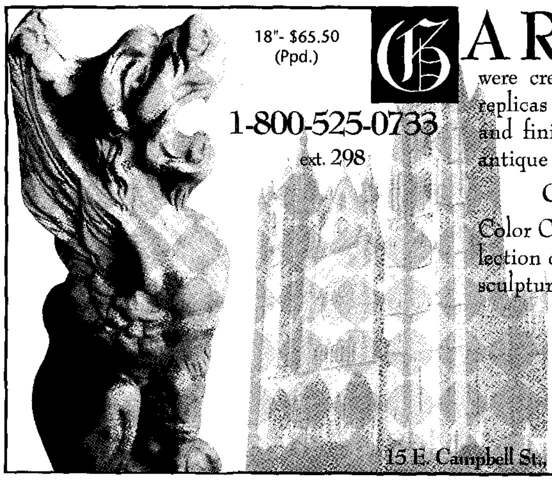

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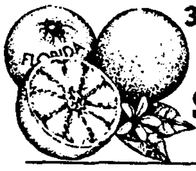

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TWYLA THARP'S BOTTOM LINE

by Joan Acocella

Twyla Tharp, at the early age of fifty-one, has unburdened herself of an autobiography, "Push Comes to Shove" (Bantam; $24.50), and, if nothing else, it will remind the dance world of happier days. Tharp was the golden child of the seventies, and its most representative young choreographer. She was involved in all the major dance trends of the decade—the avant-garde's move into the mainstream, the high-art use of popular culture, the rise of TV dance, the truce between those old enemies modern dance and ballet, and their marriage in the so-called crossover ballet. Indeed, she led several of these trends.

The basis of Tharp's great style was the rock-and-roll dancing of her youth, the fifties and sixties—in other words, rock and roll before it lost its connection with jazz. Look at a film of any one of her dances from the seventies—"Eight Jelly Rolls," "The Bix Pieces," "Sue's Leg," "Baker's Dozen"—and you see it. The bent knees, the loose hips, the smart feet, the cool upper body, the easy, elastic relation to the beat: it's the insolence of rock (and of the nascent youth movement) combined with the wit and elegance of jazz. To transfer this kind of dancing from the sock hop to the stage, Tharp pushed much further the combination of ease and rigor that already existed in the style. In her dances, the upper body slipped and slumped and swung; meanwhile, the lower body was accomplishing miracles of speed, agility, and musicality. "Her demands in relationship to the music are more specific than almost anything I have ever done," her collaborator Mikhail Baryshnikov has said.

With her new autobiography, the choreographer isn't in denial anymore.

Furthermore, Tharp made this same opposition the logic of the ensemble. At one moment, her dancers would be sprinkled across the stage, all doing what seemed to be separate dances. The next minute, that apparent randomness would congeal into a joint purpose—a sudden catch, a wave of unison or counterpoint—showing, as you now realized, that the dancers had been working together all along. It was like watching cell division under a microscope: at first, just protoplasm; then, suddenly, the threads, the spindle, the inner purpose. And each of the two principles, order and disorder, lent a kind of grace to the other. When the dancers were together, they never lost their spontaneity. When they were apart, you still felt their secret communion. These dances had no stories. Their dance logic was their story—the portrait of a world that could contain you and still let you be.

In the mid-seventies, Tharp took the formula to its limit by transferring it to classical ballet. Now she was pitting ease not just against rigor but against the most rigorous, most articulate style of Western dance. In "Deuce Coupe," her first crossover ballet—indeed, *the* first crossover ballet—she mostly juxtaposed ballet with her rock-based style. But when Mikhail Baryshnikov defected from the Soviet Union and she began her collaboration with him at American Ballet Theatre, she went further. Now she had not just the most articulate style of Western dance but the world's most articulate practitioner of that style. What she (and he) achieved was a kind of apotheosis of her disorderly order. Plumb-line pirouettes suddenly melting off sidewise, *grands battements* so grand, so forceful, that they knocked the body off balance—not so much, however, that it didn't recover in an instant, and launch itself into some other feat of embattled perfection—and all this, moreover, while sliding and diving down the beat like an otter down a snowbank: it looked like a dream. And what Tharp learned with Baryshnikov she brought back to her company, pushing her dancers to greater heights of skill and daring.

It *was* a dream—a symbol, an idea. And that fact, not just the wit and beauty of the dancing, accounts for Tharp's immense popularity with audiences of the seventies. Her work was an idea about America: that you could indeed have freedom and order at the same time. It was also an idea about history: that you could question the past without losing it. (In several important works Tharp combined jazz with classical music, and when she made classical ballets she gave them jazzy titles: "Deuce Coupe," "As Time Goes By," "Push Comes to Shove.") Above all, Tharp's work was an idea about the sixties: that you could still have that sensibility in the seventies. You could tighten up and still be loose, "go commercial" and still be an artist, grow up without ceasing to be young. Describing "Baker's Dozen," the triumphant work she made for her company at the end of the seventies, Tharp stresses this principle: "Chaos is only momentary. Everything fits." Order can coexist with individuality. She always thought of "Baker's Dozen," she says, as being like Edward Hicks' "Peaceable Kingdom." It was, and in the seventies, when many of the Woodstock generation were getting M.B.A.s, that was a comforting vision. You could lie down with the lion and still be a lamb.

Then, in 1980, things changed. Almost overnight, Tharp overhauled both her style and her subject matter. No more peaceable kingdom, no more happy balance. Indeed, no more pure dance. Her dances now had stories. "Bad Smells" (1982) ended with what looked like a murder, "Short Stories" (1980) with rape. "The Catherine Wheel" (1981) featured a hellish family, with the mother pimping for the daughter, and the father humping the dog. Even passages of abstract dance, when they were there, looked different. They had a new, bladelike force. Where was all this fury coming from? According to the autobiography, it was there all along.

Tharp did most of her growing up in the desert town of Rialto, California. Her father had a car dealership, her mother a drive-in. Both parents were ferocious go-getters. The father built the family house with his own hands—plumbing, wiring, everything—in one year. On a farm that he worked during the Second World War, he liked to drive two tractors simultaneously. When he wasn't operating large machinery, he would go off and bag elk with a bow and arrow. Once, he almost bagged his wife as well. Tharp doesn't go into detail about her parents' marriage, but she describes a scene in which, during a quarrel over how high the new breakfast table should be, her father picked up a hatchet and threw it at her mother's head, missing her by inches.

Twyla learned the ropes. Once, out hunting with her father, she, too, killed an elk. "I imagined I had become a member of my father's lodge," she says. That's the first of several animal-killings in the book. On the occasion of the second—when she and her father bludgeoned a rattlesnake to death in the desert—she began to dance spontaneously. "I had tapped into the primitive drive that celebrates brave physical conquest. . . . I had created my first dance."

And then there was the mother, Lecile, nicknamed Lethal by her four children. Twyla was the first of those children, and Lecile had plans for her. When Twyla was one and a half, Lecile began giving her ear training at the piano. Soon the child was taken to a teacher, then other teachers. By the time Twyla was a teen-ager, Lecile, by her own estimate, was logging thirty thousand miles a year driving her daughter to lessons in "baton, ballet, toe, flamenco, drums, elocution, painting, viola, violin, acrobatics, shorthand, German, and French." Meanwhile, Twyla was also going to school, and if she got anything less than an A-minus, Lecile transferred her to a new school. (Between third grade and college, Twyla attended seven schools.) In the book, Tharp reproduces a schedule that she made for herself at age twelve. It takes her, without a pause, from 6 A.M. ("put practice clothes on") to 9:30 P.M. ("eat supper, get ready for bed"). Often there wasn't any supper. Lecile herself was too busy to cook. Twyla ate red-hots from the drive-in candy counter and then went to bed. On weekends, and all summer, she bagged popcorn at the drive-in. She didn't know how not to work. "Leisure, if it ever came, produced only dread."

She grew into a prim little teen-ager with a pixie hairdo and glasses, "sharp-cornered pink metal affairs to poke the eye out of any venturesome boy." Sometimes she heard the call of the wild. One of her jobs at the drive-in was to walk around with a flashlight counting heads in cars that Lecile suspected of containing more people than had been paid for.

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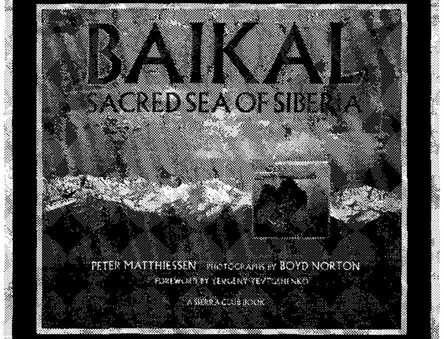
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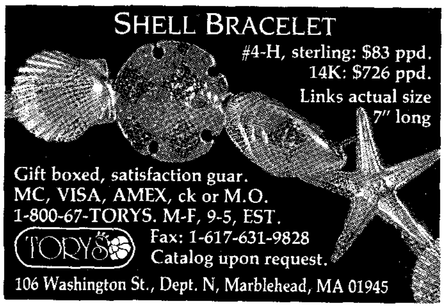

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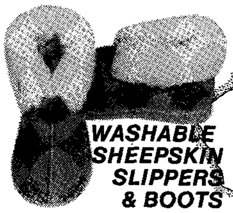

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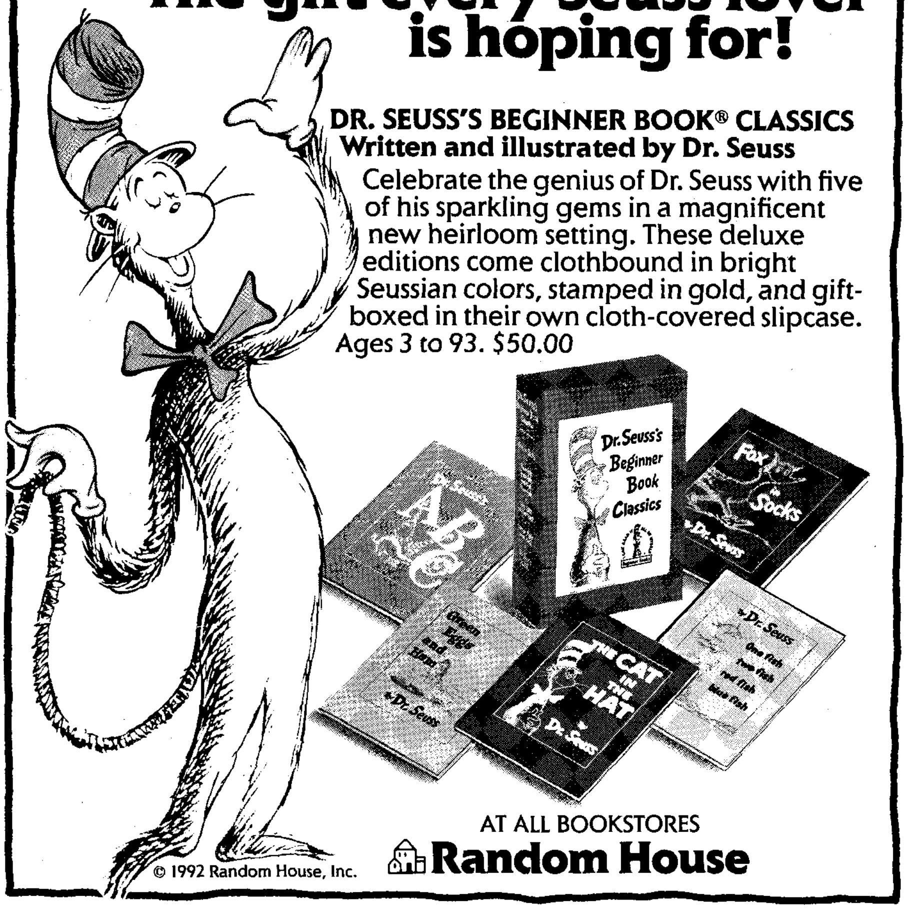
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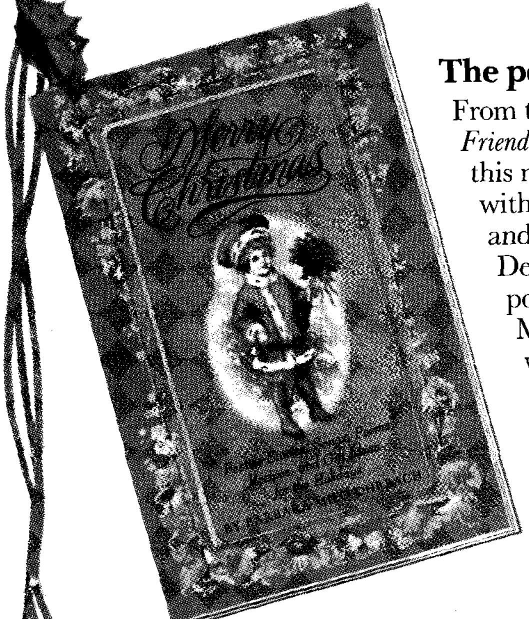

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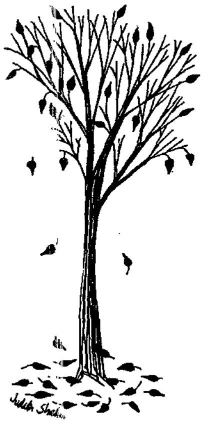
Peering into those cars, Twyla saw a great deal more than extra heads. This is an unforgettable scene in the book: the child, standing in the dark, "gasping for breath" among the rocking chassis. She never went with boys, though. As Lecile later explained it to an interviewer, "dating and proms would have gotten in her way." Twyla agreed. Like most children in such situations, she collaborated, and became the thing that was wanted of her long before she knew to object. Great achievers are often produced by parents like this, and great achievers rarely forgive their parents. There are two main themes in Tharp's book. One is the drive for success, and success in many areas—not just modern dance but ballet, Broadway, movies, television ("baton, ballet, toe, flamenco . . ."). The other is rage, focussed for the most part on her mother.

In 1960, Tharp landed in New York, thanks to another one of her mother's school transfers. (Enrolled in a college near home, Tharp had finally taken a boyfriend and gone to bed with him. Lecile found out and, to separate them, moved Tharp clear across the country to Barnard.) She was now out of her mother's reach, but for the next ten years—the years when she finished college, started dancing professionally, and began making her own dances—she labored under the feeling of being dominated by others. This is a common and understandable emotion among young artists, but in Tharp it was especially strong, as strong as her ambition. In the two years she spent performing with Paul Taylor's company, from 1963 to 1965, she would do things like say "You're kidding" when Taylor showed her a phrase he wanted her to dance. In the book, she quotes a remark of Taylor's on her time with the company: "I can hear her now, walking around the studio, saying, 'Gimme, gimme, gimme.' "

She moved in with a painter, Bob Huot, in 1965 and married him soon after. He was big and confident and hardworking and tough—the kind of man she liked—and he practiced a tough-guy art, minimalism. Through him, she was introduced to New York's downtown art world and its dance division, Judson Dance Theatre. A number of the Judsonites were friends and girlfriends of the pioneers of minimalist art, and the dances they made were equally austere and anti-commercial. Tharp's earliest choreography showed their influence. She made dances that used only three steps in forty-five minutes; dances that took place in darkness, lit only by flashlights carried by the dancers (and "mainly directed into the audience's eyes"); dances based on mathematical formulas so complicated that the dancers had to carry instructions around with them in rehearsal. Like most of the Judsonites, she had no truck with music, let alone proscenium stages or sets or costumes. "We kind of liked the idea of making audiences unhappy then," Tharp has said, and, in case they had succeeded, her group took no curtain calls—a practice she held to for five years.



Eventually, she wearied of these rigors. Judson's rejection of the sensuous experience of dancing started to look priggish to her. By 1971, with "Eight Jelly Rolls," her dancers were not only dancing on stages, and in attractive costumes; they were dancing to music. They even went out and got Vidal Sassoon haircuts. Tharp laid aside all her theoretical concerns—or, rather, she backed them into a cage. Systems and formulas were now reduced to a benign principle of order, against which she played off a new freedom—wit, surprise, a looping joy—all this symbolic, no doubt, of her escape from her latest dictator, the avant-garde. She had found her great subject: order/disorder. The Judsonites dropped her, audiences embraced her, and she was on her way.

But under the pressure of her new devotion to her career—and to commercial success, which Huot deplored—her marriage hit the rocks. In 1972, she moved out, but not alone. Her son, Jesse, had been born the year before. She was now a single mother, changing diapers in the middle of rehearsal. And then there were the rehearsals. She had what was fast becoming a very successful company, for which, season by season, she had to supply new works, train new dancers, and arrange concert dates. It is a testament to the vagaries of the artistic imagination, or perhaps to the difference between apprenticeship and maturity, that when she was most free, in the sixties, all her dances were about control, and when, in the seventies, she was most hemmed in, by her child and her company, all her dances were about freedom. Planning for "Deuce Coupe" in 1973, she writes, she decided to include in it "all those magical steps I never did—the bugaloo, the mashed potato, the slop, the go-go." Her youth over, she became young at last.

Not for long. The offers poured in. Would she do ballets, movies, TV programs, Broadway shows? Yes, she would. To refuse would have been to quell her new sense of mastery. She began piggybacking projects, two and three at a time. While still working with her company, she was making ballets for the Joffrey and American Ballet Theatre. When her company was just hitting its stride—that is, when she could least afford to leave it—she took most of 1977 and 1978 off to work on Milos Forman's movie "Hair" (a terrible flop, as it turned out).

Meanwhile, she still had Jesse. She hired a housekeeper to look after him, and she would call him from the road, almost hoping that he wouldn't be there, so she wouldn't have to feel bad. Her life started to unravel: booze, bad affairs. She got herself a psychoanalyst, one Dr. Stern, and it was presumably under the influence of her discussions with him that, in the early eighties, she started making autobiographical works, full of rage. In 1982, she made her last great dance, "Nine Sinatra Songs," and it's a wonder that she did that, in between the TV shows, the ice-skating routines for the Olympics, the movies ("Ragtime," 1980; "Amadeus," 1984; "White Nights," 1985). She was on the road continually. Between 1982 and 1985, she says, she flew the equivalent of five times around the world (shades of Lecile's thirty thousand miles a year). She was now drinking so heavily that her hands shook. Jesse, at his request, went off to boarding school.

In 1984, she was approached to direct a Broadway production of "Singin' in the Rain." She had no directing experience. The show had no star. (No one was willing to compete with Gene Kelly.) By contract, she couldn't change the script. And the dance numbers were so famous that she couldn't change them, either. Still, Tharp and the producers convinced themselves that this already legendary movie could be transferred to the stage. Predictably, it was a disaster.

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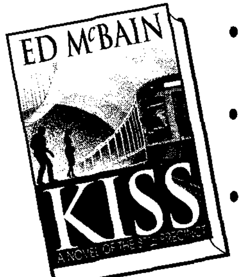

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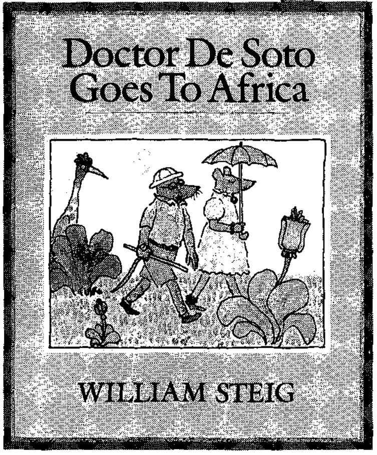
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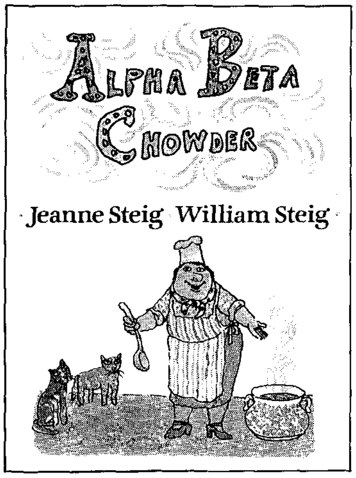

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Dr. Stern had told her that she was out of control. And at roughly the same time, with Dorian Gray-like logic, the book goes out of control. She is simply doing too many things that cannot be explained with dignity. Speaking of the death at the end of "Bad Smells," she says it was based on an image planted in her mind during a trip to Mexico: an Aztec priest standing on top of a monument and slicing "the skin of a human offering so that the body would roll out of it, down the monument's many steps, leaving the skin intact in the priest's hand as though a huge zipper had been undone." She says, "The victim's heart would somehow still be beating until the split second he or she hit the bottom." And, in the gray psychological language that she now adopts to analyze her emotions, she adds, "This image resonated with a feeling of victimization I had started to identify in my work with Dr. Stern, and I determined the 'priest' was not only the men in my life, he was also my mother." As I presume Dr. Stern told her, the priest was also herself. The whole second half of the book alternates between the two poles of this grisly image: aggression and victimization.

Anger, or at least surliness, had always been part of Tharp's work. It was there in the feisty teen-agers of "Deuce Coupe." It was there in Tharp herself, this tiny little tomboy bopping around the stage and, when she was offstage, running circles around her interviewers. Gradually, however, her aggression overtook her intelligence, first in her work, now in her book. The terms in which she describes "In the Upper Room," the piece with which she made her comeback after "Singin' in the Rain," are enough to make you shiver. The dancers "rip the space open," she says. They "burn the retina," "impacting on the eye," "socking the air," executing now a "karate kick," now a " 'black fist' victory gesture." They are a "phalanx," a "Bomb Squad," a "sea of blood." "In the Upper Room" was indeed a tough-looking piece, but also cheerful and brassy. I don't think anyone besides Tharp saw those women, in their little red dresses, as a sea of blood. Another quality that began to seep into her work in the eighties, and that permeates the latter part of the book, is gigantism. All her talk is of "mega-hits," standing ovations, oysters and champagne.

That's when she's happy. When she's unhappy, all her talk is of victimization:

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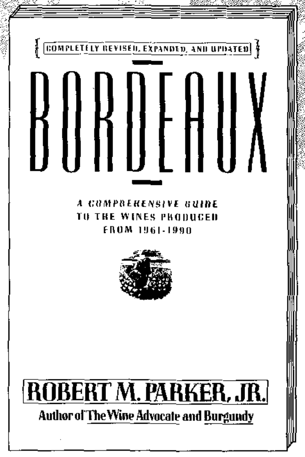
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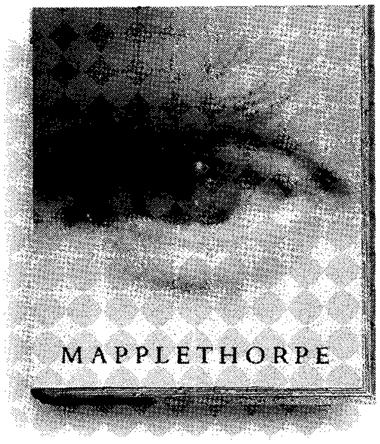
her loneliness, her bad affairs, the damage her mother did to her. This kind of thing, hard to listen to in the first place, is harder to listen to in combination with the self-glorification, for it begins to sound like excuse-making. One minute, she's talking about a gala she staged at the Rainbow Room, and her description is utterly credulous. Everyone came in "formally correct evening clothes," she says. "Each table setting was complete with a gift package." And all in honor of her. But then, in mid-paragraph, she is assailed by the thought that someone—for example, her mother, who was at the party—might have begrudged her these fine things: "Like the rest of the world, she chose to ignore that the fur was rented, the jewels borrowed, the penthouse I took Jesse home to leaky and lonely." The leaky penthouse sort of sums it up.

This book is important as a woman's story. Tharp's drive for glory and also her aloneness, her feeling that her career precludes a decent relationship with a man, are part of the history of ambitious and talented women in our period. (When was the last time we heard a male artist complaining that his career barred him from having intimate relationships?) The book also documents, cruelly, a period in which artists are seen as having a choice between righteous isolation—actual repudiation of the public—and "selling out." Despite the signs of the eighties, that formula is still with us. Finally, and most crucially, the book explains what it means, in practical terms, to be a choreographer—a story too seldom told. To be a choreographer, one must have a company. As Tharp herself says, early in the book, "developing dance means developing dancers—the two are inseparable, and anyone who attempts to bypass this step is kidding himself." If the dancers aren't trained in your style, it doesn't matter how good your choreography is—it won't be translated into a good performance, and dance exists only in performance. Furthermore, if you don't have a company there is no way to preserve your older works. They simply die. So a company is a necessity, the fundamental tool of the choreographer's art. And then, for almost everyone, it becomes a kind of prison as well. To keep the company going, the choreographer must continually make new works for it. Whether or not the inspiration is there, the season is coming up—it was booked two years



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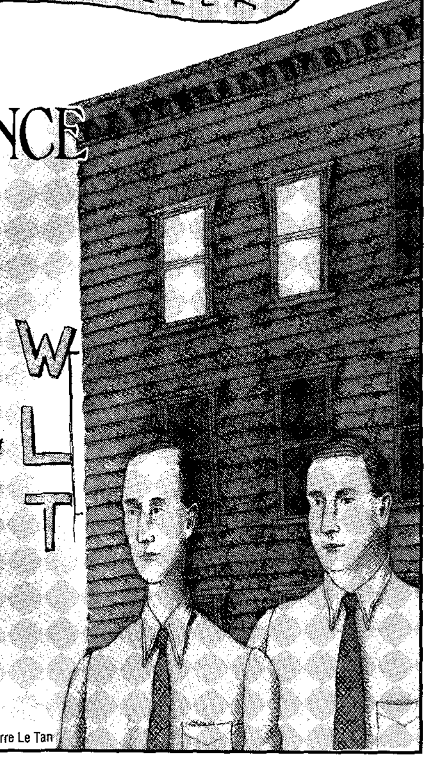

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ago. There must be a première, preferably two premières. And so it goes, from season to season, until, in many cases, the choreographer burns out. People sometimes wonder why there are so few great choreographers. We should wonder, rather, why there are so many. When painters get tired or bored, they can move to the country for a year and cool out. Or they can take a side road: book illustration, set design, graphics. A choreographer with a company can do a little of this, maybe one side job a year, but that's the limit. For Tharp, that limit was way too low.

Add to this the fact that the company tends to shorten the choreographer's performing career. Like many first-class choreographers—Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor—Tharp began as a first-class dancer, and dancing feeds a part of the self that choreographic achievement cannot touch. But the choreographer can't do it all. Tharp created wonderful roles for herself in both "The Catherine Wheel" and "Nine Sinatra Songs," but in the end she had to give them to another dancer. In "When We Were Very Young," one of her last big roles, she ended the piece by dropping into the orchestra pit. "I was jumping the gun on what I saw coming—the double and triple whammy of forced retirement from the stage, menopause, and approaching death," she says. Make that a single whammy. Menopause and death were still far away; retirement from the stage was death enough. Tharp estimates that she stopped dancing well at age thirty-four. After forty, she stopped dancing altogether, except for brief comebacks. Last year, she began performing again. She is still a marvellous stage presence, but, as for dancing, she is now in her fifties. It's late.

So Tharp in this book touches on big issues. But how unthoughtful she is about them. The problem of being a woman she handles, if that is the word, simply by wishing that she were a man and by adopting the brute-force postures that she thinks of as manly. The book is full of stories of her tough-guyism: how she took no guff from ballet-company directors, how she drank with the big boys, how, whatever she did, she was never a sissy. The tougher she gets, the harder she gets.

As for the integrity-versus-commercialism issue, this is something on which we might have hoped for a serious statement from her, for in the seventies her career was a shining example of how an artist could "go commercial" and still be an artist. We do get a statement, early on: "One clear difference between art and commercial work is that commercial work is exploitive: the work may be high quality, but the intention is to sell product." Pretty strict, but O.K. Then she plunges into a long confession of product-selling intention. As early as 1971, while she was making "Eight Jelly Rolls," she would sit in the studio trying to "remember all the places we had really hooked the audience" in an earlier version of that dance. Two years later, planning "Deuce Coupe" for the Joffrey, she did her market research beforehand, attending Joffrey performances and watching the audience, "trying to gauge what got through to them—rather like Mother stocking the drive-in candy counter." I am not shocked by these avowals. "Eight Jelly Rolls" and "Deuce Coupe" were art, and if they also sold tickets, and by intention, God bless them. But I *think* Tharp is shocked. Schooled in the puritanical avant-garde of the sixties, she is both guilty and defiant, a seminarian in a whorehouse. Once the art actually starts to suffer, she gets defensive. Apropos of "Singin' in the Rain," she claims she decided that it would benefit her company—the company she effectively dissolved in order to do the show. She could bring some of the dancers with her, she figured, and they would work on repertory together: "In my quixotic world, Broadway would subsidize art." What quixotic world? And what about Broadway *as* art? The scary thing about Tharp's increasing commercialism in the eighties is not just her neglect of "art" but her contempt for the commercial projects, and hence for herself. Soon she's in so deep that she's not even defensive anymore. The talk is all bottom line, a phrase that starts to appear again and again.

On the subject of the choreographer's plight—the unbreakable tie to the company—she is most confused of all. She solved the problem in her own way. After "Singin' in the Rain," she formed a new company to replace the old one. Two years later, she folded that one, too, in order to become a resident choreographer at American Ballet Theatre. Then, after leaving A.B.T., she assembled yet another troupe—this one, however, with its impermanence built into it. It is a pickup company, with dancers hired on a per-tour basis, and it looks like a pickup company: a bunch of young pieceworkers giving their all, but with no actual grounding in a company style. This is the compromise that Tharp made, for the sake of—what? Her curiosity, her need for change, her drive for stardom—a host of reasons, running the scale from integrity to commercialism. Yet the terms in which she discusses the issue have nothing to do with professional concerns—only with the same old business of aggression and victimization. Faced with the A.B.T. offer, she looks at her company and decides that she has become "the victim of this group." She writes, "After fifteen years of talking to Dr. Stern regularly, I could no longer avoid the obvious: my company was not my family. It had become a habit with me, a horrible codependency. . . . I felt trapped in a Sisyphean treadmill, a smaller and smaller person making better and better product. My bottom line was dance; the realest, truest me was a small creature yelling, 'Feed me! Feed me!' I was the company, the company was me, and until we separated there was no private me for anyone, including my son, to be with." Leaving aside the fact that she wasn't making better and better product, as she calls it, one must ask how, if her "bottom line" was really dance, she could think it was a good idea to destroy her dance company. What she seems to be telling us, actually, is that her bottom line was the bottom line. In view of that imperative, the slow, toiling business of developing a company must indeed have seemed to her a "horrible codependency"—or, in any case, a pain in the neck.

The codependency breakthrough is only one of many epiphanies that litter the second half of the book. The last one comes in the last chapter. She meets a young man at the gym, eventually invites him up to her studio ("to see my etchings"), then decides that she doesn't want to seduce him after all but, instead, wants to make a dance with him. And at that moment, she says, "I beat the *re*'s." What are the *re*'s? Well, in the past, she was operating on a "drive to revenge and repair the past, fueling myself with resentment, rebellion, through reaction, by rebounding, in reclaiming, from regret"—all these motivations deriving from her relationship with her mother. It was to shove her mother out of her emotional center that she had been in the habit of scarfing up one man after another. To her, those men were simply a generic category—men. They filled a need. Now, somehow,

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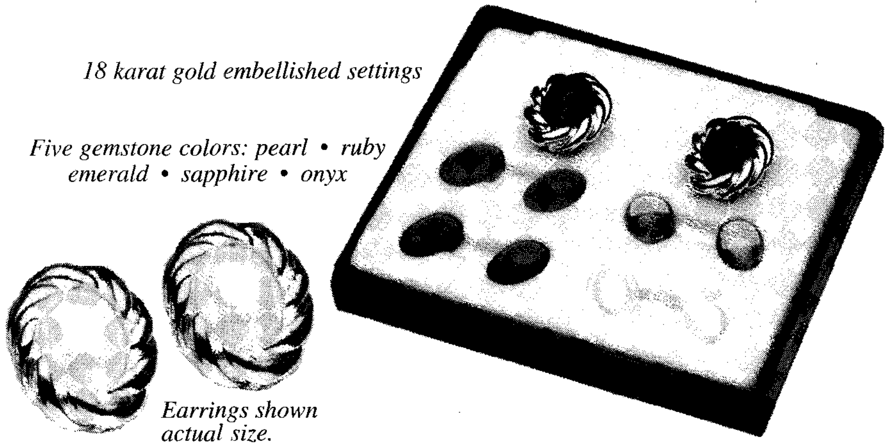

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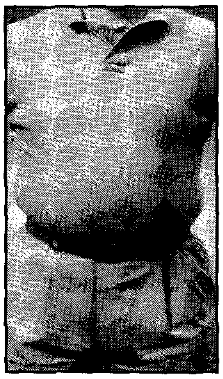

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she is released from this pattern, and in the flush of revelation she makes a dance, "The Men's Piece," about her new "attempt to know men individually, not generically." For the record, "The Men's Piece," which was shown in Tharp's 1992 New York season, was not about men, let alone men known individually. It was about Tharp, who also starred in it. The men in its cast were generic: three generic dancers plus a generic partner, Kevin O'Day—a big, hunky guy who perfectly fits Tharp's notion of what men are.

In the course of her struggles with herself, Tharp gave up drinking, but her work life is as busy, and as scattered, as ever. She has just finished working on another movie, James Brooks' "I'll Do Anything." Her plans for the future include commissions from the Boston Ballet and the Martha Graham company. In the meantime, she has reassembled her pickup company for a new tour, a gruelling three-month circuit of twenty-six cities—mostly one-night stands in large theatres, which, with Baryshnikov on board as a guest artist, will probably sell out. (Tharp is now undoubtedly the highest-paid choreographer in American concert dance.) When the tour is over, the troupe will disband again.

The tour begins on November 27th, and the publication date of "Push Comes to Shove," November 23rd, was obviously chosen to coincide with it. By its end, this autobiography, with its long tale of commercial projects, begins to look like a very commercial project itself. It fits right into that currently beloved genre wherein a star tells all about his or her journey through you-name-it—alcoholism, drug addiction, depression, codependency—and comes out O.K. in the end. Indeed, "Push Comes to Shove" looks to have been modelled on the dance world's most famous contribution to that genre—Gelsey Kirkland's 1986 "Dancing on My Grave." Like Kirkland's book, it even includes a discussion of what Baryshnikov is like in the sack. (Page 208, if you want to read it in the bookstore. Tharp gives him much better marks than Kirkland did.) Again, the problem is not the commercial venture but Tharp's low opinion of commercial ventures, and hence her lowered ambition for them, apart from their profitability. This book will tell you everything—the abortion, the boyfriend who socked her in the face—except how intelligent she was. ♦

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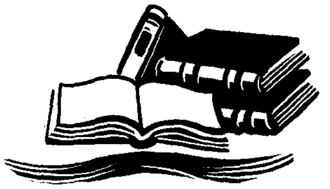


BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Katerina
by Aharon Appelfeld, translated from the Hebrew by Jeffrey M. Green
(Random House; $18)

A PEASANT in the kind of Eastern European village that glories in brutishness and drink, Katerina grows up to despise the thin, pale Jews who peddle stockings and embroidery, and from whom it is virtually a point of honor to steal. Nevertheless, when she is starving in the city she accepts work as a servant in a Jewish household, and comes to love her employers with such fierceness that she regards herself as one of them, while still making it a point of honor to steal from Jews on occasion. She goes to great lengths to be sure that her son is circumcised, but also to bring him up like a hearty peasant, because "a weak Jew arouses dark instincts." Glimpses of provincial culture between the wars are fascinating, yet so much of the action is allegorical that one hesitates to trust them. And though the vileness of anti-Semitism is hardly to be condoned, making "Jew" a byword for goodness, and peasant life a metaphor for rapacity, jarringly transfers the opposition to an abstract plane, as though it were the very will of God that these people should hate each other.

In Memory of Junior
by Clyde Edgerton (Algonquin; $16.95)

MORE benign and bemused small-town comedy from a North Carolina novelist whose sensibility is as sharp as it is gentle. The plot ostensibly centers on the question of what happens to the Bales family estate when two competing bequeathers expire simultaneously. What really happens is a roundelay, in which first-person narrators with incongruous motives tell a tale of multigenerational intrigue that becomes ridiculously tangled in a web of present-day misunderstanding. Mr. Edgerton creates voices—including those of a daredevil coot with impractical suicide plans, a sixteen-year-old computer hacker who has no use for the Southern-style masculinity of his elders, a spectacularly unhappy housewife whose realization that she is a lesbian causes an uproar, and a plain-speaking black home-care nurse—that sound exactly like themselves, rather than like a version of the author. Some of the events, such as the death of a child, are not funny, but Mr. Edgerton's ability to shine a clear, warm light on the dark things of life without becoming sugary makes a vivid backdrop for his tolerant humor and his alertness to the human genius for nonsense. "They say He works in mysterious ways," one character remarks. "Well, I do too."

GENERAL

Dean Acheson: The Cold War Years, 1953-1971
by Douglas Brinkley (Yale; $35)

THIS volume recounts and assesses Acheson's career after 1952, when Eisenhower was elected President and Acheson ceased to be Secretary of State. The Republican smear campaign in that election was in Acheson's case so thorough that the man who had led America's efforts to unite Western Europe against Soviet expansion looked like a pro-Communist political liability to his fellow-Democrats. However, he retained the affection and loyalty of his old boss, Harry Truman, and the retired President gradually encouraged him to return to battle. In the Eisenhower years, Acheson was a critic, particularly of Dulles's diplomacy, which relied on nuclear threats, but during the Presidencies of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon he became an adviser and trouble-shooter. He died in 1971. Generally, Mr. Brinkley admires Acheson's consistency as a believer in European civilization and his tenacity as a worker for North Atlantic freedom and unity. But he finds that Acheson had little interest in Africa and Asia, and less sympathy for their peoples' desire to end colonialism. And although Acheson's forceful, acerbic language can be entertaining, his harsh wit too often turned disagreement into enmity.

A Day in the Night of America
by Kevin Coyne (Random House; $22)

ACCORDING to the author, ten million Americans now stay awake long after the rest of the population has turned in. Travelling from Massachusetts to Alaska, he penetrated the unseen, inverted existence of people who live by night—interstate truckers, convenience-store clerks, NORAD and SAC personnel, homeless-shelter attendants, currency traders, astronomers. There's a lot happening out there in the dark, and Mr. Coyne entertainingly conveys the scope of this shadow world. Some glimpses are memorable—the United States Border Patrol carrying out nocturnal manhunts in Texas, the Trappist monks of Utah practicing predawn rites of quiet beauty—while others, such as Federal Express workers sorting overnight parcels in Memphis, are merely routine. Still, every chapter offers new appreciation of a nation that apparently never sleeps, and the scattered trivia (Henry Ford had two suits made from a soy-based textile) are delightful. The only notable weakness here is a straining for metaphor: sentences like "Tonight the Big Dipper looked close enough to ladle up some fresh water" can get a bit wearing.

VERSE

New and Selected Poems
by Mary Oliver (Beacon; $20)

MARY OLIVER is often caught up in a love affair with the splendor of the natural world, a world perfect and abiding even if the poet is absent: "One morning / the fox came down the hill, glittering and confident, / and didn't see me—and I thought: / so this is the world. / I'm not in it. / It is beautiful." Against a mosaic of, say, "long rain" or a river, she can animate human emotion, or, in a watercolor of wild geese, emphasize home truths; she possesses an alert and patient eye, along with a dreamer's fitful compulsion, and is equally playful and parabolic. In curious ways, she resembles both Emily Dickinson and Flannery O'Connor, with touches of Dickinson's crabbed lyricism, and of O'Connor's ornery forthrightness and frayed humor. Occasionally, jejune philosophical statements on behalf of optimism will mar the view, but in general her stance is that of a stoical joyfulness. ◆

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

ONE MAN'S VOTE

by Philip Hamburger

All through the intense Presidential campaign, two lines from "Waiting for Godot" kept running through my mind: Estragon says, "I can't go on like this," and Vladimir replies, "That's what you think." I have voted in fifteen Presidential elections, the first in 1936 (for Franklin Roosevelt, of course), but never before have I or those near and dear reached such heights of pre-election anxiety. Rightly or wrongly, we felt that if our man lost, our country would be lost, too—Supreme Court, jobs, racial reconciliation, abortion rights, you name it. (Even had Hoover been reëlected in dark 1932, we would have kept in the White House a President who had appointed Charles Evans Hughes and Benjamin Cardozo to the Supreme Court.) Damp hands, poor appetite, short temper—all telltale signs covered by that irritating Teutonic word "angst." I watched the Republican conclave in Houston with a friend and neighbor who was born in Berlin—a scientist of international renown, driven from his native land by primal hatreds. During Pat Buchanan's preliminary tirade, this man sat silent and rigid, but when Buchanan called for a religious war he leaned over, his face ashen, and said, "I see the armbands."

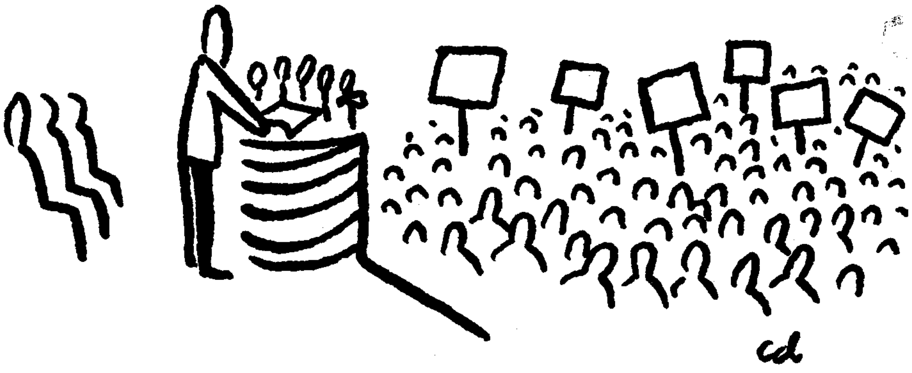
We devoured the papers, hugged the tube. I noted a fascinating development in the technique of the Big Lie: someone would tell a vicious whopper (implying, with no sustaining facts, that Clinton had been buddy-buddy with the K.G.B., say), and then, the next day—or perhaps just hours later—deny that such a statement had been made. Lying about lying, I hope, will turn out to be a political ploy without a future.

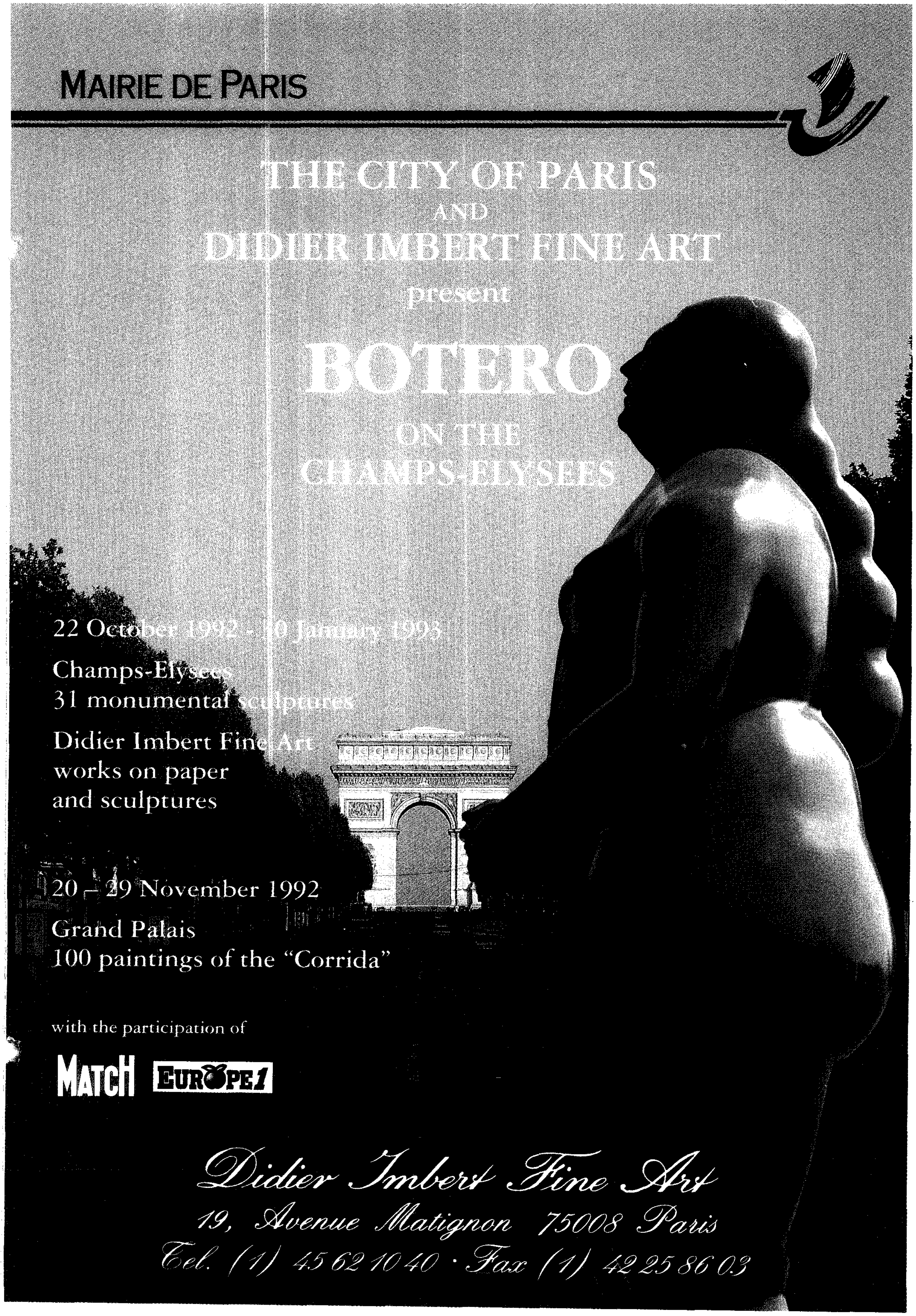
There were bright, even encouraging moments, especially when the tube showed us the excited, smiling faces of thousands who had stayed up long past midnight in small towns all over the map to catch glimpses of Clinton and Gore as they came through on the bus. I was reminded of a day in the forties when I left this office and walked over to Broadway and Forty-fourth Street, near the old Astor Hotel, to watch President Truman (the real live one) ride past in an open car. Huge crowds lined the streets. Truman wore a smile of profound inner confidence. With enormous and unforgettable dignity, he waved to the crowd, and I recall saying to myself, over and over again, "This man connects."

As November drew closer, tension increased geometrically. Daily, we were whipsawed by the polls—it's narrowing, it's widening, it's narrowing, it's widening—and by the ubiquitous pundits. There was a sickening sense that the high office of the Presidency was being demeaned by self-inflicted wounds.

At long last, that memorable Election Day. Teeming rain. At 7:30 A.M., I walked to my usual polling place, to find unprecedented, uncomplaining lines. An interminable wait, only to learn that my polling place had been changed to an old-folks' home four blocks from where I stood, dripping wet. Two instant thoughts. One practical: the lines at the old-folks' home would be so long that I should accept fate, throw in the sponge, and prepare to live there. The other, paranoid: the entire election process was a fraud, everybody's venue had been secretly changed, and New Yorkers would be robbed of their votes.

At the home, more long lines, but only three machines. Many citizens, like me, found themselves in an unexpected voting place, and there was great commotion. "I'm a doctor, and I have patients waiting, but nothing is going to stop me from voting," a young man standing next to me said. "You bet your sweet life," said a businesslike brunette behind me. "I'm voting today if I have to stay here through the night." Democracy was rescued by a fragile wisp of a woman, a volunteer poll-watcher who called herself Connie. Connie had arrived at six: no officials on hand, no registration books, and one of the three machines was broken. "I stood on a chair and shouted for calm," she said. She then methodically reached election headquarters, had the broken machine repaired, and, clutching a neighborhood list of addresses, directed people to the proper booths. Finally, I voted. Now that it's over, my friends and I have not yet unwound. We are smiling again. Warily. ♦





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